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THE VAILIMA EDITION

OF THE WORKS OF

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

P. F. COLLIER & SON
NEW YORK

8 Howard Place
The Birthplace of Robert Louis Stevenson

THE WORKS OF
ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

MEMORIES AND PORTRAITS

A FAMILY OF ENGINEERS

POEMS AND BALLADS

VOLUME FIVE

P. F. COLLIER & SON
NEW YORK

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MEMORIES AND PORTRAITS

TO

MY MOTHER

IN THE

NAME OF PAST JOY AND PRESENT SORROW

I DEDICATE

THESE MEMORIES AND PORTRAITS

S.S. "Ludgate Hill"
within sight of Cape Race

AUTHOR'S NOTE

This volume of papers, unconnected as they are, it will be better to read through from the beginning, rather than dip into at random. A certain thread of meaning binds them. Memories of childhood and youth, portraits of those who have gone before us in the battle—taken together, they build up a face that "I have loved long since and lost a while," the face of what was once myself. This has come by accident; I had no design at first to be autobiographical; I was but led away by the charm of beloved memories and by regret for the irrevocable dead; and when my own young face (which is a face of the dead also) began to appear in the well as by a kind of magic, I was the first to be surprised at the occurrence.

My grandfather the pious child, my father the idle, eager sentimental youth, I have thus unconsciously exposed. Of their descendant, the person of to-day, I wish to keep the secret: not because I love him better, but because, with him, I am still in a business partnership, and can not divide interests.

Of the papers which make up the volume, some have appeared already in The Cornhill, Longman's, Scribner's, The English Illustrated, The Magazine of Art, The Contemporary Review; *three are here in print for the first time; and two others have enjoyed only what may be regarded as a private circulation.*

R. L. S.

MEMORIES AND PORTRAITS

CHAPTER I

THE FOREIGNER AT HOME

"This is no my ain house;
I ken by the biggin' o't."

TWO recent books,[1] one by Mr. Grant White on England, one on France by the diabolically clever Mr. Hillebrand, may well have set people thinking on the divisions of races and nations. Such thoughts should arise with particular congruity and force to inhabitants of that United Kingdom, peopled from so many different stocks, babbling so many different dialects, and offering in its extent such singular contrasts, from the busiest overpopulation to the unkindliest desert, from the Black Country to the Moor of Rannoch. It is not only when we cross the seas that we go abroad; there are foreign parts of England; and the race that has conquered so wide an empire has not yet managed to assimilate the islands whence she sprang. Ireland, Wales and the Scottish mountains still cling, in part, to their old Gaelic speech. It was but the other day that English triumphed in Cornwall, and they still show in Mousehole, on St. Michael's Bay, the house of the last Cornish-speaking woman. English itself, which will now frank the traveler through the most of North America, through the greater South Sea Islands, in India, along much of the coast of Africa, and in the ports of China and Japan, is still to be heard, in its home country, in half a hundred varying stages of transition. You may go all over the States, and — setting aside the actual intrusion and influence of foreigners,

[1] 1881.

negro, French, or Chinese—you shall scarce meet with so marked a difference of accent as in the forty miles between Edinburgh and Glasgow, or of dialect as in the hundred miles between Edinburgh and Aberdeen. Book English has gone round the world, but at home we still preserve the racy idioms of our fathers, and every country, in some parts every dale, has its own quality of speech, vocal or verbal. In like manner, local custom and prejudice, even local religion and local law, linger on into the latter end of the nineteenth century—*imperia in imperio,* foreign things at home.

In spite of these promptings to reflection, ignorance of his neighbors is the character of the typical John Bull. His is a domineering nature, steady in fight, imperious to command, but neither curious nor quick about the life of others. In French colonies, and still more in the Dutch, I have read that there is an immediate and lively contact between the dominant and the dominated race, that a certain sympathy is begotten, or at the least a transfusion of prejudices, making life easier for both. But the Englishman sits apart, bursting with pride and ignorance. He figures among his vassals in the hour of peace with the same disdainful air that led him on to victory. A passing enthusiasm for some foreign art or fashion may deceive the world, it can not impose upon his intimates. He may be amused by a foreigner as by a monkey, but he will never condescend to study him with any patience. Miss Bird, an authoress with whom I profess myself in love, declares all the viands of Japan to be uneatable—a staggering pretension. So, when the Prince of Wales's marriage was celebrated at Mentone by a dinner to the Mentonese, it was proposed to give them solid English fare —roast beef and plum pudding, and no tomfoolery. Here we have either pole of the Britannic folly. We will not eat the food of any foreigner; nor, when we have the chance, will we suffer him to eat of it himself. The same spirit inspired Miss Bird's American missionaries, who had come thousands of miles to change the faith of Japan, and openly professed their ignorance of the religions they were trying to supplant.

I quote an American in this connection without scruple. Uncle Sam is better than John Bull, but he is tarred with the English stick. For Mr. Grant White the States are the New England States and nothing more. He wonders at the amount of drinking in London; let him try San Francisco. He wittily reproves English ignorance as to the status of women in America; but has he not himself forgotten Wyoming? The name Yankee, of which he is so tenacious, is used over the most of the great Union as a term of reproach. The Yankee States, of which he is so stanch a subject, are but a drop in the bucket. And we find in his book a vast virgin ignorance of the life and prospects of America; every view partial, parochial, not raised to the horizon; the moral feeling proper, at the largest, to a clique of States; and the whole scope and atmosphere not American, but merely Yankee. I will go far beyond him in reprobating the assumption and the incivility of my countryfolk to their cousins from beyond the sea; I grill in my blood over the silly rudeness of our newspaper articles; and I do not know where to look when I find myself in company with an American and see my countrymen unbending to him as to a performing dog. But in the case of Mr. Grant White example were better than precept. Wyoming is, after all, more readily accessible to Mr. White than Boston to the English, and the New England self-sufficiency no better justified than the Britannic.

It is so, perhaps, in all countries; perhaps in all, men are most ignorant of the foreigners at home. John Bull is ignorant of the States; he is probably ignorant of India; but considering his opportunities, he is far more ignorant of countries nearer his own door. There is one country, for instance—its frontier not so far from London, its people closely akin, its language the same in all essentials with the English—of which I will go bail he knows nothing. His ignorance of the sister kingdom can not be described; it can only be illustrated by anecdote. I once traveled with a man of plausible manners and good intelligence—a University man, as the phrase goes—a man, besides, who had taken his degree in life and knew

a thing or two about the age we live in. We were deep in talk, whirling between Peterborough and London; among other things, he began to describe some piece of legal injustice he had recently encountered, and I observed in my innocence that things were not so in Scotland. "I beg your pardon," said he, "this is a matter of law." He had never heard of the Scots law; nor did he choose to be informed. The law was the same for the whole country, he told me roundly; every child knew that. At last, to settle matters, I explained to him that I was a member of a Scottish legal body, and had stood the brunt of an examination in the very law in question. Thereupon he looked me for a moment full in the face and dropped the conversation. This is a monstrous instance, if you like, but it does not stand alone in the experience of Scots.

England and Scotland differ, indeed, in law, in history, in religion, in education, and in the very look of nature and men's faces, not always widely, but always trenchantly. Many particulars that struck Mr. Grant White, a Yankee, struck me, a Scot, no less forcibly; he and I felt ourselves foreigners on many common provocations. A Scotchman may tramp the better part of Europe and the United States, and never again receive so vivid an impression of foreign travel and strange lands and manners as on his first excursion into England. The change from a hilly to a level country strikes him with delighted wonder. Along the flat horizon there arise the frequent venerable towers of churches. He sees at the end of airy vistas the revolution of the windmill sails. He may go where he pleases in the future; he may see Alps, and Pyramids, and lions; but it will be hard to beat the pleasure of that moment. There are, indeed, few merrier spectacles than that of many windmills bickering together in a fresh breeze over a woody country; their halting alacrity of movement, their pleasant business, making bread all day with uncouth gesticulations, their air, gigantically human, as of a creature half alive, put a spirit of romance into the tamest landscape. When the Scotch child sees them first he falls immediately in love; and from that

time forward windmills keep turning in his dreams. And so, in their degree, with every feature of the life and landscape. The warm, habitable age of towns and hamlets, the green, settled, ancient look of the country; the lush hedgerows, stiles, and privy pathways in the fields; the sluggish, brimming rivers; chalk and smock-frocks; chimes of bells and the rapid, pertly-sounding English speech—they are all new to the curiosity; they are all set to English airs in the child's story that he tells himself at night. The sharp edge of novelty wears off; the feeling is scotched, but I doubt whether it is ever killed. Rather it keeps returning, ever the more rarely and strangely, and even in scenes to which you have been long accustomed suddenly awakes and gives a relish to enjoyment or heightens the sense of isolation.

One thing especially continues unfamiliar to the Scotchman's eye—the domestic architecture, the look of streets and buildings; the quaint, venerable age of many, and the thin walls and warm coloring of all. We have, in Scotland, far fewer ancient buildings, above all in country places; and those that we have are all of hewn or harled masonry. Wood has been sparingly used in their construction; the window-frames are sunken in the wall, not flat to the front, as in England; the roofs are steeper-pitched; even a hill farm will have a massy, square, cold and permanent appearance. English houses, in comparison, have the look of cardboard toys, such as a puff might shatter. And to this the Scotchman never becomes used. His eye can never rest consciously on one of these brick houses—rickles of brick, as he might call them—or on one of these flat-chested streets, but he is instantly reminded where he is, and instantly travels back in fancy to his home. "This is no my ain house; I ken by the biggin' o't." And yet perhaps it is his own, bought with his own money, the key of it long polished in his pocket: but it has not yet, and never will be, thoroughly adopted by his imagination; nor does he cease to remember that, in the whole length and breadth of his native country, there was no building even distantly resembling it.

But it is not alone in scenery and architecture that we

count England foreign. The constitution of society, the very pillars of the empire, surprise and even pain us. The dull, neglected peasant, sunk in matter, insolent, gross and servile, makes a startling contrast with our own long-legged, long-headed, thoughtful Bible-quoting plowman. A week or two in such a place as Suffolk leaves the Scotchman gasping. It seems incredible that within the boundaries of his own island a class should have been thus forgotten. Even the educated and intelligent, who hold our own opinions and speak in our own words, yet seem to hold them with a difference or from another reason, and to speak on all things with less interest and conviction. The first shock of English society is like a cold plunge. It is possible that the Scot comes looking for too much, and to be sure his first experiment will be in the wrong direction. Yet surely his complaint is grounded; surely the speech of Englishmen is too often lacking in generous ardor, the better part of the man too often withheld from the social commerce, and the contact of mind with mind evaded as with terror. A Scotch peasant will talk more liberally out of his own experience. He will not put you by with conversational counters and small jests; he will give you the best of himself, like one interested in life and man's chief end. A Scotchman is vain, interested in himself and others, eager for sympathy, setting forth his thoughts and experience in the best light. The egoism of the Englishman is self-contained. He does not seek to proselytize. He takes no interest in Scotland or the Scotch, and, what is the unkindest cut of all, he does not care to justify his indifference. Give him the wages of going on and being an Englishman, that is all he asks; and in the mean time, while you continue to associate, he would rather not be reminded of your baser origin. Compared with the grand, tree-like self-sufficiency of his demeanor, the vanity and curiosity of the Scot seem uneasy, vulgar and immodest. That you should continually try to establish human and serious relations, that you should actually feel an interest in John Bull, and desire and invite a return of interest from him, may argue something more awake and lively in your mind, but it still puts

you in the attitude of a suitor and a poor relation. Thus even the lowest class of the educated English towers over a Scotchman by the head and shoulders.

Different indeed is the atmosphere in which Scotch and English youth begin to look about them, come to themselves in life, and gather up those first apprehensions which are the material of future thought and, to a great extent, the rule of future conduct. I have been to school in both countries, and I found, in the boys of the North, something at once rougher and more tender, at once more reserve and more expansion, a greater habitual distance checkered by glimpses of a nearer intimacy, and on the whole wider extremes of temperament and sensibility. The boy of the South seems more wholesome, but less thoughtful; he gives himself to games as to a business, striving to excel, but is not readily transported by imagination; the type remains with me as cleaner in mind and body, more active, fonder of eating, endowed with a lesser and a less romantic sense of life and of the future, and more immersed in present circumstances. And certainly, for one thing, English boys are younger for their age. Sabbath observance makes a series of grim, and perhaps serviceable, pauses in the tenor of Scotch boyhood—days of great stillness and solitude for the rebellious mind, when in the dearth of books and play, and in the intervals of studying the Shorter Catechism, the intellect and senses prey upon and test each other. The typical English Sunday, with the huge midday dinner and the plethoric afternoon, leads perhaps to different results. About the very cradle of the Scot there goes a hum of metaphysical divinity; and the whole of two divergent systems is summed up, not merely speciously, in the two first questions of the rival catechisms, the English tritely inquiring, "What is your name?" the Scottish striking at the very roots of life, with "What is the chief end of man?" and answering nobly, if obscurely, "To glorify God and to enjoy Him forever." I do not wish to make an idol of the Shorter Catechism; but the fact of such a question being asked opens to us Scotch a great field of speculation; and the fact that it is asked of all of us, from the

peer to the plowboy, binds us more nearly together. No Englishman of Byron's age, character and history, would have had patience for long theological discussions on the way to fight for Greece; but the daft Gordon blood and the Aberdonian schooldays kept their influence to the end. We have spoken of the material conditions; nor need much more be said of these: of the land lying everywhere more exposed, of the wind always louder and bleaker, of the black, roaring winters, of the gloom of high-lying, old stone cities, imminent on the windy seaboard; compared with the level streets, the warm coloring of the brick, the domestic quaintness of the architecture, among which English children begin to grow up and come to themselves in life. As the stage of the University approaches, the contrast becomes more express. The English lad goes to Oxford or Cambridge; there, in an ideal world of gardens, to lead a semi-scenic life, costumed, disciplined and drilled by proctors. Nor is this to be regarded merely as a stage of education; it is a piece of privilege besides, and a step that separates him further from the bulk of his compatriots. At an earlier age the Scottish lad begins his greatly different experience of crowded class-rooms, of a gaunt quadrangle, of a bell hourly booming over the traffic of the city to recall him from the public-house where he has been lunching, or the streets where he has been wandering fancy-free. His college life has little of restraint, and nothing of necessary gentility. He will find no quiet clique of the exclusive, studious and cultured; no rotten borough of the arts. All classes rub shoulders on the greasy benches. The raffish young gentleman in gloves must measure his scholarship with the plain, clownish laddie from the parish school. They separate, at the season's end, one to smoke cigars about a watering-place, the other to resume the labors of the field beside his peasant family. The first muster of a college class in Scotland is a scene of curious and painful interest; so many lads, fresh from the heather, hang round the stove in cloddish embarrassment, ruffled by the presence of their smarter comrades, and afraid of the sound of their own rustic voices. It was in these early days, I think, that

Professor Blackie won the affection of his pupils, putting these uncouth, umbrageous students at their ease with ready human geniality. Thus, at least, we have a healthy democratic atmosphere to breathe in while at work; even when there is no cordiality there is always a juxtaposition of the different classes, and in the competition of study the intellectual power of each is plainly demonstrated to the other. Our tasks ended, we of the North go forth as freemen into the humming, lamplit city. At five o'clock you may see the last of us hiving from the college gates, in the glare of the shop windows, under the green glimmer of the winter sunset. The frost tingles in our blood; no proctor lies in wait to intercept us; till the bell sounds again, we are the masters of the world; and some portion of our lives is always Saturday, *la trêve de Dieu*.

Nor must we omit the sense of the nature of his country and his country's history gradually growing in the child's mind from story and from observation. A Scottish child hears much of shipwreck, outlying iron skerries, pitiless breakers, and great sea-lights; much of heathery mountains, wild clans, and hunted Covenanters. Breaths come to him in song of the distant Cheviots and the ring of foraying hoofs. He glories in his hard-fisted forefathers, of the iron girdle and the handful of oatmeal, who rode so swiftly and lived so sparely on their raids. Poverty, ill-luck, enterprise, and constant resolution are the fibers of the legend of his country's history. The heroes and kings of Scotland have been tragically fated; the most marking incidents in Scottish history—Flodden, Darien, or the Forty-five—were still either failures or defeats; and the fall of Wallace and the repeated reverses of the Bruce combine with the very smallness of the country to teach rather a moral than a material criterion for life. Britain is altogether small, the mere taproot of her extended empire: Scotland, again, which alone the Scottish boy adopts in his imagination, is but a little part of that, and avowedly cold, sterile and unpopulous. It is not so for nothing. I once seemed to have perceived in an American boy a greater readiness of sympathy for lands that are great, and rich, and growing, like his own.

It proved to be quite otherwise: a mere dumb piece of boyish romance, that I had lacked penetration to divine. But the error serves the purpose of my argument; for I am sure, at least, that the heart of young Scotland will be always touched more nearly by paucity of number and Spartan poverty of life.

So we may argue, and yet the difference is not explained. That Shorter Catechism which I took as being so typical of Scotland was yet composed in the city of Westminster. The division of races is more sharply marked within the borders of Scotland itself than between the countries. Galloway and Buchan, Lothian and Lochaber, are like foreign parts; yet you may choose a man from any of them, and, ten to one, he shall prove to have the headmark of a Scot. A century and a half ago the Highlander wore a different costume, spoke a different language, worshiped in another church, held different morals, and obeyed a different social constitution from his fellow-countrymen either of the south or north. Even the English, it is recorded, did not loathe the Highlander and the Highland costume as they were loathed by the remainder of the Scotch. Yet the Highlander felt himself a Scot. He would willingly raid into the Scotch lowlands; but his courage failed him at the border, and he regarded England as a perilous, unhomely land. When the Black Watch, after years of foreign service, returned to Scotland, veterans leaped out and kissed the earth at Port Patrick. They had been in Ireland, stationed among men of their own race and language, where they were well liked and treated with affection; but it was the soil of Galloway that they kissed at the extreme end of the hostile lowlands, among a people who did not understand their speech, and who had hated, harried, and hanged them since the dawn of history. Last, and perhaps most curious, the sons of chieftains were often educated on the continent of Europe. They went abroad speaking Gaelic; they returned speaking, not English, but the broad dialect of Scotland. Now, what idea had they in their minds when they thus, in thought, identified themselves with their ancestral enemies? What was the

sense in which they were Scotch and not English, or Scotch and not Irish? Can a bare name be thus influential on the minds and affections of men, and a political aggregation blind them to the nature of facts? The story of the Austrian Empire would seem to answer, No; the far more galling business of Ireland clenches the negative from nearer home. Is it common education, common morals, a common language or a common faith, that join men into nations? There were practically none of these in the case we are considering.

The fact remains: in spite of the difference of blood and language, the Lowlander feels himself the sentimental countryman of the Highlander. When they meet abroad, they fall upon each other's necks in spirit; even at home there is a kind of clannish intimacy in their talk. But from his compatriot in the south the Lowlander stands consciously apart. He has had a different training; he obeys different laws; he makes his will in other terms, is otherwise divorced and married; his eyes are not at home in an English landscape or with English houses; his ear continues to remark the English speech; and even though his tongue acquire the Southern knack, he will still have a strong Scotch accent of the mind.

CHAPTER II

SOME COLLEGE MEMORIES[1]

I AM asked to write something (it is not specifically stated what) to the profit and glory of my *Alma Mater;* and the fact is I seem to be in very nearly the same case with those who addressed me, for while I am willing enough to write something, I know not what to write. Only one point I see, that if I am to write at all, it should be of the University itself and my own days under its shadow: of the things that are still the same and of those that are already changed: such talk, in short, as would pass naturally between a student of to-day and one of yesterday, supposing them to meet and grow confidential.

The generations pass away swiftly enough on the high seas of life: more swiftly still in the little bubbling backwater of the quadrangle; so that we see there, on a scale startlingly diminished, the flight of time and the succession of men. I looked for my name the other day in last year's case book of the Speculative. Naturally enough I looked for it near the end; it was not there, nor yet in the next column, so that I began to think it had been dropped at press; and when at last I found it, mounted on the shoulders of so many successors, and looking in that posture like the name of a man of ninety, I was conscious of some of the dignity of years. This kind of dignity of temporal precession is likely, with prolonged life, to become more familiar, possibly less welcome; but I felt it strongly then, it is strongly on me now, and I am the more emboldened to speak with my successors in the tone of a parent and a praiser of things past. For, indeed, that which they attend is but a fallen University; it has doubt-

[1] Written for the "Book" of the Edinburgh University Union Fancy Fair.

less some remains of good, for human institutions decline by gradual stages; but decline, in spite of all seeming embellishments, it does; and what is perhaps more singular, began to do so when I ceased to be a student. Thus, by an odd chance, I had the very last of the very best of *Alma Mater;* the same thing, I hear (which makes it the more strange), had previously happened to my father; and if they are good and do not die, something not at all unsimilar will be found in time to have befallen my successors of to-day. Of the specific points of change, of advantage in the past, of shortcoming in the present, I must own that, on a near examination, they look wondrous cloudy. The chief and far the most lamentable change is the absence of a certain lean, ugly, idle, unpopular student, whose presence was for me the gist and heart of the whole matter; whose changing humors, fine occasional purposes of good, flinching acceptance of evil, shiverings on wet, east-windy, morning journeys up to class, infinite yawnings during lecture and unquenchable gusto in the delights of truantry, made up the sunshine and shadow of my college life. You can not fancy what you missed in missing him; his virtues, I make sure, are inconceivable to his successors, just as they were apparently concealed from his contemporaries, for I was practically alone in the pleasure I had in his society. Poor soul, I remember how much he was cast down at times, and how life (which had not yet begun) seemed to be already at an end, and hope quite dead, and misfortune and dishonor, like physical presences, dogging him as he went. And it may be worth while to add that these clouds rolled away in their season, and that all clouds roll away at last, and the troubles of youth in particular are things but of a moment. So this student, whom I have in my eye, took his full share of these concerns, and that very largely by his own fault; but he still clung to his fortune, and in the midst of much misconduct, kept on in his own way learning how to work and at last, to his wonder, escaped out of the stage of studentship not openly shamed; leaving behind him the University of Edinburgh shorn of a good deal of its interest for myself.

But while he is (in more senses than one) the first person, he is by no means the only one whom I regret, or whom the students of to-day, if they knew what they had lost, would regret also. They have still Tait, to be sure —long may they have him!—and they have still Tait's class-room, cupola and all; but think of what a different place it was when this youth of mine (at least on roll days) would be present on the benches, and, at the near end of the platform, Lindsay senior[1] was airing his robust old age. It is possible my successors may have never even heard of Old Lindsay; but when he went, a link snapped with the last century. He had something of a rustic air, sturdy and fresh and plain; he spoke with a ripe east-country accent, which I used to admire; his reminiscences were all of journeys on foot or highways busy with post-chaises—a Scotland before steam; he had seen the coal fire on the Isle of May, and he regaled me with tales of my own grandfather. Thus he was for me a mirror of things perished; it was only in his memory that I could see the huge shock of flames of the May beacon stream to leeward, and the watchers, as they fed the fire, lay hold unscorched of the windward bars of the furnace; it was only thus that I could see my grandfather driving swiftly in a gig along the seaboard road from Pittenweem to Crail, and for all his business hurry, drawing up to speak good-humoredly with those he met. And now, in his turn, Lindsay is gone also: inhabits only the memories of other men, till these shall follow him; and figures in my reminiscences as my grandfather figured in his.

To-day, again, they have Professor Butcher, and I hear he has a prodigious deal of Greek; and they have Professor Chrystal, who is a man filled with the mathematics. And doubtless these are set-offs. But they can not change the fact that Professor Blackie has retired, and that Professor Kelland is dead. No man's education is complete or truly liberal who knew not Kelland. There were unutterable lessons in the mere sight of that frail old clerical gentleman, lively as a boy, kind like a fairy godfather, and keeping perfect order in his class by the

[1] Professor Tait's laboratory assistant.

spell of that very kindness. I have heard him drift into reminiscences in class time, though not for long, and give us glimpses of old-world life in out-of-the-way English parishes when he was young; thus playing the same part as Lindsay—the part of the surviving memory, signaling out of the dark backward and abysm of time the images of perished things. But it was a part that scarce became him; he somehow lacked the means: for all his silver hair and worn face, he was not truly old; and he had too much of the unrest and petulant fire of youth, and too much invincible innocence of mind, to play the veteran well. The time to measure him best, to taste (in the old phrase) his gracious nature, was when he received his class at home. What a pretty simplicity would he then show, trying to amuse us like children with toys; and what an engaging nervousness of manner, as fearing that his efforts might not succeed! Truly he made us all feel like children, and like children embarrassed, but at the same time filled with sympathy for the conscientious, troubled elder-boy who was working so hard to entertain us. A theorist has held the view that there is no feature in man so telltale as his spectacles; that the mouth may be compressed and the brow smoothed artificially, but the sheen of the barnacles is diagnostic. And truly it must have been thus with Kelland; for as I still fancy I behold him frisking actively about the platform, pointer in hand, that which I seem to see most clearly is the way his glasses glittered with affection. I never knew but one other man who had (if you will permit the phrase) so kind a spectacle; and that was Dr. Appleton. But the light in his case was tempered and passive; in Kelland's it danced, and changed, and flashed vivaciously among the students, like a perpetual challenge to good-will.

I can not say so much about Professor Blackie, for a good reason. Kelland's class I attended, once even gained there a certificate of merit, the only distinction of my University career. But although I am holder of a certificate of attendance in the professor's own hand, I can not remember to have been present in the Greek class above a dozen times. Professor Blackie was even kind enough to

remark (more than once) while in the very act of writing the document above referred to, that he did not know my face. Indeed, I denied myself many opportunities; acting upon an extensive and highly rational system of truantry, which cost me a great deal of trouble to put in exercise—perhaps as much as would have taught me Greek—and sent me forth into the world and the profession of letters with the merest show of an education. But they say it is always a good thing to have taken pains, and that success is its own reward, whatever be its nature; so that, perhaps, even upon this I should plume myself, that no one ever played the truant with more deliberate care, and none ever had more certificates for less education. One consequence, however, of my system is that I have much less to say of Professor Blackie than I had of Professor Kelland; and as he is still alive, and will long, I hope, continue to be so, it will not surprise you very much that I have no intention of saying it.

Meanwhile, how many others have gone—Jenkin, Hodgson, and I know not who besides; and of that tide of students that used to throng the arch and blacken the quadrangle, how many are scattered into the remotest parts of the earth, and how many more have lain down beside their fathers in their "resting-graves"! And again, how many of these last have not found their way there, all too early, through the stress of education! That was one thing, at least, from which my truantry protected me. I am sorry indeed that I have no Greek, but I should be sorrier still if I were dead; nor do I know the name of that branch of knowledge which is worth acquiring at the price of a brain fever. There are many sordid tragedies in the life of the student, above all if he be poor, or drunken, or both; but nothing more moves a wise man's pity than the case of the lad who is in too much hurry to be learned. And so, for the sake of a moral at the end, I will call up one more figure, and have done. A student, ambitious of success by that hot, intemperate manner of study that now grows so common, read night and day for an examination. As he went on, the task became more easy to him, sleep was more easily banished, his brain

grew hot and clear and more capacious, the necessary knowledge daily fuller and more orderly. It came to the eve of the trial and he watched all night in his high chamber, reviewing what he knew, and already secure of success. His window looked eastward, and being (as I said) high up, and the house itself standing on a hill, commanded a view over dwindling suburbs to a country horizon. At last my student drew up his blind, and still in quite a jocund humor, looked abroad. Day was breaking, the east was tinging with strange fires, the clouds breaking up for the coming of the sun; and at the sight, nameless terror seized upon his mind. He was sane, his senses were undisturbed; he saw clearly, and knew what he was seeing, and knew that it was normal; but he could neither bear to see it nor find the strength to look away, and fled in panic from his chamber into the enclosure of the street. In the cool air and silence, and among the sleeping houses, his strength was renewed. Nothing troubled him but the memory of what had passed, and an abject fear of its return.

> "Gallo canente, spes redit,
> Aegris salus refunditur,
> Lapsis fides revertitur,"

as they sang of old in Portugal in the Morning Office. But to him that good hour of cockcrow, and the changes of the dawn, had brought panic, and lasting doubt, and such terror as he still shook to think of. He dared not return to his lodging; he could not eat; he sat down, he rose up, he wandered; the city woke about him with its cheerful bustle, the sun climbed overhead; and still he grew but the more absorbed in the distress of his recollection and the fear of his past fear. At the appointed hour, he came to the door of the place of examination; but when he was asked he had forgotten his name. Seeing him so disordered, they had not the heart to send him away, but gave him a paper and admitted him, still nameless, to the Hall. Vain kindness, vain efforts. He could only sit in a still growing horror, writing nothing, ignorant of all, his mind filled with a single memory of the breaking day

and his own intolerable fear. And that same night he was tossing in a brain fever.

People are afraid of war and wounds and dentists, all with excellent reason; but these are not to be compared with such chaotic terrors of the mind as fell on this young man, and made him cover his eyes from the innocent morning. We all have by our bedsides the box of the Merchant Abudah, thank God, securely enough shut; but when a young man sacrifices sleep to labor, let him have a care, for he is playing with the lock.

CHAPTER III

OLD MORTALITY

I

THERE is a certain graveyard, looked upon on the one side by a prison, on the other by the windows of a quiet hotel; below, under a steep cliff, it beholds the traffic of many lines of rail, and the scream of the engine and the shock of meeting buffers mount to it all day long. The aisles are lined with the enclosed sepulchers of families, door beyond door, like houses in a street; and in the morning the shadow of the prison turrets, and of many tall memorials, fall upon the graves. There, in the hot fits of youth, I came to be unhappy. Pleasant incidents are woven with my memory of the place. I here made friends with a certain plain old gentleman, a visitor on sunny mornings, gravely cheerful, who, with one eye upon the place that awaited him, chirped about his youth like winter sparrows; a beautiful housemaid of the hotel once, for some days together, dumbly flirted with me from a window and kept my wild heart flying; and once —she possibly remembers—the wise Eugenia followed me to that austere enclosure. Her hair came down, and in the shelter of the tomb my trembling fingers helped her to repair the braid. But for the most part I went there solitary and, with irrevocable emotion, pored on the names of the forgotten. Name after name, and to each the conventional attributions and the idle dates: a regiment of the unknown that had been the joy of mothers, and had thrilled with the illusions of youth, and at last, in the dim sick-room, wrestled with the pangs of old mortality. In that whole crew of the silenced there was but one of whom my fancy had received a picture; and he, with his comely, florid countenance, bewigged and habited

in scarlet, and in his day combining fame and popularity, stood forth, like a taunt, among that company of phantom appellations. It was then possible to leave behind us something more explicit than these severe, monotonous and lying epitaphs; and the thing left, the memory of a painted picture and what we call the immortality of a name, was hardly more desirable than mere oblivion. Even David Hume, as he lay composed beneath that "circular idea," was fainter than a dream; and when the housemaid, broom in hand, smiled and beckoned from the open window, the fame of that bewigged philosopher melted like a raindrop in the sea.

And yet in soberness I cared as little for the housemaid as for David Hume. The interests of youth are rarely frank; his passions, like Noah's dove, come home to roost. The fire, sensibility, and volume of his own nature, that is all that he has learned to recognize. The tumultuary and gray tide of life, the empire of routine, the unrejoicing faces of his elders, fill him with contemptuous surprise; there also he seems to walk among the tombs of spirits; and it is only in the course of years, and after much rubbing with his fellow men, that he begins by glimpses to see himself from without and his fellows from within: to know his own for one among the thousand undenoted countenances of the city street, and to divine in others the throb of human agony and hope. In the mean time he will avoid the hospital doors, the pale faces, the cripple, the sweet whiff of chloroform—for there, on the most thoughtless, the pains of others are burned home; but he will continue to walk, in a divine self-pity, the aisles of the forgotten graveyard. The length of man's life, which is endless to the brave and busy, is scorned by his ambitious thought. He can not bear to have come for so little, and to go again so wholly. He can not bear, above all, in that brief scene, to be still idle, and by way of cure, neglects the little that he has to do. The parable of the talent is the brief epitome of youth. To believe in immortality is one thing, but it is first needful to believe in life. Denunciatory preachers seem not to suspect that they may be taken gravely and in evil part; that young

men may come to think of time as of a moment, and with the pride of Satan wave back the inadequate gift. Yet here is a true peril; this it is that sets them to pace the graveyard alleys and to read, with strange extremes of pity and derision, the memorials of the dead.

Books were the proper remedy: books of vivid human import, forcing upon their minds the issues, pleasures, busyness, importance and immediacy of that life in which they stand; books of smiling or heroic temper, to excite or to console; books of a large design, shadowing the complexity of that game of consequences to which we all sit down, the hanger-back not least. But the average sermon flees the point, disporting itself in that eternity of which we know, and need to know, so little; avoiding the bright, crowded, and momentous fields of life where destiny awaits us. Upon the average book a writer may be silent; he may set it down to his illhap that when his own youth was in the acrid fermentation, he should have fallen and fed upon the cheerless fields of Obermann. Yet to Mr. Arnold, who led him to these pastures, he still bears a grudge. The day is perhaps not far off when people will begin to count *Moll Flanders*, ay, or *The Country Wife*, more wholesome and more pious diet than these guide-books to consistent egoism.

But the most inhuman of boys soon wearies of the inhumanity of Obermann. And even while I still continued to be a haunter of the graveyard, I began insensibly to turn my attention to the grave-diggers, and was weaned out of myself to observe the conduct of visitors. This was dayspring, indeed, to a lad in such great darkness. Not that I began to see men, or to try to see them, from within, nor to learn charity and modesty and justice from the sight; but still stared at them externally from the prison windows of my affectation. Once I remember to have observed two working women with a baby halting by a grave; there was something monumental in the grouping, one upright carrying the child, the other with bowed face crouching by her side. A wreath of immortelles under a glass dome had thus attracted them; and, drawing near, I overheard their judgment on that wonder. "Eh!

what extravagance!" To a youth afflicted with the callosity of sentiment, this quaint and pregnant saying appeared merely base.

My acquaintance with grave-diggers, considering its length, was unremarkable. One, indeed, whom I found plying his spade in the red evening, high above Allan Water and in the shadow of Dunblane Cathedral, told me of his acquaintance with the birds that still attended on his labors; how some would even perch about him, waiting for their prey; and in a true Sexton's Calendar, how the species varied with the season of the year. But this was the very poetry of the profession. The others whom I knew were somewhat dry. A faint flavor of the gardener hung about them, but sophisticated and disbloomed. They had engagements to keep, not alone with the deliberate series of the seasons, but with mankind's clocks and hour-long measurement of time. And thus there was no leisure for the relishing pinch, or the hour-long gossip, foot on spade. They were men wrapped up in their grim business; they liked well to open long-closed family vaults, blowing in the key and throwing wide the grating; and they carried in their minds a calendar of names and dates. It would be "in fifty-twa" that such a tomb was last opened for "Miss Jemimy." It was thus they spoke of their past patients—familiarity but not without respect, like old family servants. Here is indeed a servant, whom we forget that we possess; who does not wait at the bright table, or run at the bell's summons, but patiently smokes his pipe beside the mortuary fire, and in his faithful memory notches the burials of our race. To suspect Shakespeare in his maturity of a superficial touch savors of paradox; yet he was surely in error when he attributed insensibility to the digger of the grave. But perhaps it is on Hamlet that the charge should lie; or perhaps the English sexton differs from the Scotch. The "goodman delver," reckoning up his years of office, might have at least suggested other thoughts. It is a pride common among sextons. A cabinet-maker does not count his cabinets, nor even an author his volumes, save when they stare upon him from the shelves; but the grave-digger

numbers his graves. He would indeed be something different from human if his solitary open-air and tragic labors left not a broad mark upon his mind. There, in his tranquil aisle, apart from city clamor, among the cats and robins and the ancient effigies and legends of the tomb, he waits the continual passage of his contemporaries, falling like minute drops into eternity. As they fall, he counts them; and this enumeration, which was at first perhaps appalling to his soul, in the process of years and by the kindly influence of habit grows to be his pride and pleasure. There are many common stories telling how he piques himself on crowded cemeteries. But I will rather tell of the old grave-digger of Monkton, to whose unsuffering bedside the minister was summoned. He dwelt in a cottage built into the wall of the churchyard; and through a bull's-eye pane above his bed he could see, as he lay dying, the rank grasses and the upright and recumbent stones. Dr. Laurie was, I think, a Moderate: 'tis certain, at least, that he took a very Roman view of deathbed dispositions; for he told the old man that he had lived beyond man's natural years, that his life had been easy and reputable, that his family had all grown up and been a credit to his care, and that it now behooved him unregretfully to gird his loins and follow the majority. The grave-digger heard him out; then he raised himself upon one elbow, and with the other hand pointed through the window to the scene of his lifelong labors. "Doctor," he said, "I ha'e laid three hunner and fower-score in that kirkyaird; an it had been His wull," indicating Heaven, "I would ha'e likit weel to ha'e made out the fower hunner." But it was not to be; this tragedian of the fifth act had now another part to play; and the time had come when others were to gird and carry him.

II

I would fain strike a note that should be more heroical; but the ground of all youth's suffering, solitude, hysteria, and haunting of the grave, is nothing else than naked,

ignorant selfishness. It is himself that he sees dead; those are his virtues that are forgotten; his is the vague epitaph. Pity him but the more, if pity be your cue; for where a man is all pride, vanity, and personal aspiration, he goes through fire unshielded. In every part and corner of our life, to lose oneself is to be gainer; to forget oneself is to be happy; and this poor, laughable and tragic fool has not yet learned the rudiments; himself, giant Prometheus, is still ironed on the peaks of Caucasus. But by and by his truant interests will leave that tortured body, slip abroad and gather flowers. Then shall death appear before him in an altered guise; no longer as a doom peculiar to himself, whether fate's crowning injustice or his own last vengeance upon those who fail to value him; but now as a power that wounds him far more tenderly, not without solemn compensations, taking and giving, bereaving and yet storing up.

The first step for all is to learn to the dregs our own ignoble fallibility. When we have fallen through story after story of our vanity and aspiration, and sit rueful among the ruins, then it is that we begin to measure the stature of our friends: how they stand between us and our own contempt, believing in our best; how, linking us with others, and still spreading wide the influential circle, they weave us in and in with the fabric of contemporary life; and to what petty size they dwarf the virtues and the vices that appeared gigantic in our youth. So that at the last, when such a pin falls out—when there vanishes in the least breath of time one of those rich magazines of life on which we drew for our supply—when he who had first dawned upon us as a face among the faces of the city, and, still growing, came to bulk on our regard with those clear features of the loved and living man, falls in a breath to memory and shadow, there falls along with him a whole wing of the palace of our life.

III

One such face I now remember; one such blank some half a dozen of us labor to dissemble. In his youth he

was most beautiful in person, most serene and genial by disposition; full of racy words and quaint thoughts. Laughter attended on his coming. He had the air of a great gentleman, jovial and royal with his equals, and to the poorest student gentle and attentive. Power seemed to reside in him exhaustless; we saw him stoop to play with us, but held him marked for higher destinies; we loved his notice; and I have rarely had my pride more gratified than when he sat at my father's table, my acknowledged friend. So he walked among us, both hands full of gifts, carrying with nonchalance the seeds of a most influential life.

The powers and the ground of friendship is a mystery: but, looking back, I can discern that, in part, we loved the thing he was, for some shadow of what he was to be. For with all his beauty, power, breeding, urbanity and mirth, there was in those days something soulless in our friend. He would astonish us by sallies, witty, innocent and inhumane; and by a misapplied Johnsonian pleasantry, demolish honest sentiment. I can still see and hear him, as he went his way along the lamplit streets, *Là ci darem la mano* on his lips, a noble figure of a youth, but following vanity and incredulous of good; and sure enough, somewhere on the high seas of life, with his health, his hopes, his patrimony and his self-respect, miserably went down.

From this disaster, like a spent swimmer, he came desperately ashore, bankrupt of money and consideration; creeping to the family he had deserted; with broken wing, never more to rise. But in his face there was a light of knowledge that was new to it. Of the wounds of his body he was never healed; died of them gradually, with clear-eyed resignation; of his wounded pride, we knew only from his silence. He returned to that city where he had lorded it in his ambitious youth; lived there alone, seeing few; striving to retrieve the irretrievable; at times still grappling with that mortal frailty that had brought him down; still joying in his friend's successes; his laugh still ready, but with kindlier music; and over all his thoughts the shadow of that unalterable law which he had dis-

avowed and which had brought him low. Lastly, when his bodily evils had quite disabled him, he lay a great while dying, still without complaint, still finding interests; to his last step gentle, urbane and with the will to smile.

The tale of his great failure is, to those who remained true to him, the tale of a success. In his youth he took thought for no one but himself; when he came ashore again, his whole armada lost, he seemed to think of none but others. Such was his tenderness for others, such his instinct of fine courtesy and pride, that of that impure passion of remorse he never breathed a syllable; even regret was rare with him, and pointed with a jest. You would not have dreamed, if you had known him then, that this was that great failure, that beacon to young men, over whose fall a whole society had hissed and pointed fingers. Often have we gone to him, red-hot with our own hopeful sorrows, railing on the rose-leaves in our princely bed of life, and he would patiently give ear and wisely counsel; and it was only upon some return of our own thoughts that we were reminded what manner of man this was to whom we disembosomed: a man, by his own fault, ruined; shut out of the garden of his gifts; his whole city of hope both plowed and salted; silently awaiting the deliverer. Then something took us by the throat; and to see him there, so gentle, patient, brave and pious, oppressed but not cast down, sorrow was so swallowed up in admiration that we could not dare to pity him. Even if the old fault flashed out again, it but awoke our wonder that, in that lost battle, he should have still the energy to fight. He had gone to ruin with a kind of kingly *abandon,* like one who condescended; but once ruined, with the lights all out, he fought as for a kingdom. Most men, finding themselves the authors of their own disgrace, rail the louder against God or destiny. Most men, when they repent, oblige their friends to share the bitterness of that repentance. But he had held an inquest and passed sentence: *mene, mene;* and condemned himself to smiling silence. He had given trouble enough; had earned misfortune amply, and foregone the right to murmur.

Thus was our old comrade, like Samson, careless in his days of strength; but on the coming of adversity, and when that strength was gone that had betrayed him—"for our strength is weakness"—he began to blossom and bring forth. Well, now, he is out of the fight: the burden that he bore thrown down before the great deliverer. We

> "in the vast cathedral leave him;
> God accept him,
> Christ receive him!"

IV

If we go now and look on these innumerable epitaphs, the pathos and the irony are strangely fled. They do not stand merely to the dead, these foolish monuments: they are pillars and legends set up to glorify the difficult but not desperate life of man. This ground is hallowed by the heroes of defeat.

I see the indifferent pass before my friend's last resting-place; pause, with a shrug of pity, marveling that so rich an argosy had sunk. A pity, now that he is done with suffering, a pity most uncalled for, and an ignorant wonder. Before those who loved him, his memory shines like a reproach; they honor him for silent lessons; they cherish his example; and in what remains before them of their toil, fear to be unworthy of the dead. For this proud man was one of those who prospered in the valley of humiliation;—of whom Bunyan wrote that, "Though Christian had the hard hap to meet in the valley with Apollyon, yet I must tell you, that in former times men have met with angels here: have found pearls here; and have in this place found the words of life."

CHAPTER IV

A COLLEGE MAGAZINE

I

ALL through my boyhood and youth, I was known and pointed out for the pattern of an idler; and yet I was always busy on my own private end, which was to learn to write. I kept always two books in my pocket, one to read, one to write in. As I walked, my mind was busy fitting what I saw with appropriate words; when I sat by the roadside, I would either read, or a pencil and a penny version-book would be in my hand, to note down the features of the scene or commemorate some halting stanzas. Thus I lived with words. And what I thus wrote was for no ulterior use, it was written consciously for practise. It was not so much that I wished to be an author (though I wished that too) as that I had vowed that I would learn to write. That was a proficiency that tempted me; and I practised to acquire it, as men learn to whittle, in a wager with myself. Description was the principal field of my exercise; for to any one with senses there is always something worth describing, and town and country are but one continuous subject. But I worked in other ways also; often accompanied my walks with dramatic dialogues, in which I played many parts; and often exercised myself in writing down conversations from memory.

This was all excellent, no doubt; so were the diaries I sometimes tried to keep, but always and very speedily discarded, finding them a school of posturing and melancholy self-deception. And yet this was not the most efficient part of my training. Good though it was, it only taught me (so far as I have learned them at all) the lower and less intellectual elements of the art, the choice of the

essential note and the right word: things that to a happier constitution had perhaps come by nature. And regarded as training, it had one grave defect; for it set me no standard of achievement. So that there was perhaps more profit, as there was certainly more effort, in my secret labors at home. Whenever I read a book or a passage that particularly pleased me, in which a thing was said or an effect rendered with propriety, in which there was either some conspicuous force or some happy distinction in the style, I must sit down at once and set myself to ape that quality. I was unsuccessful, and I knew it; and tried again, and was again unsuccessful and always unsuccessful; but at least in these vain bouts, I got some practise in rhythm, in harmony, in construction and the coordination of parts. I have thus played the sedulous ape to Hazlitt, to Lamb, to Wordsworth, to Sir Thomas Browne, to Defoe, to Hawthorne, to Montaigne, to Baudelaire, and to Obermann. I remember one of these monkey tricks, which was called *The Vanity of Morals:* it was to have had a second part, *The Vanity of Knowledge;* and as I had neither morality nor scholarship, the names were apt; but the second part was never attempted, and the first part was written (which is my reason for recalling it, ghostlike, from its ashes) no less than three times: first in the manner of Hazlitt, second in the manner of Ruskin, who had cast on me a passing spell, and third, in a laborious pasticcio of Sir Thomas Browne. So with my other works: *Cain,* an epic, was (save the mark!) an imitation of *Sordello; Robin Hood,* a tale in verse, took an eclectic middle course among the fields of Keats, Chaucer and Morris: in *Monmouth,* a tragedy, I reclined on the bosom of Mr. Swinburne; in my innumerable gouty-footed lyrics, I followed many masters; in the first draft of *The King's Pardon,* a tragedy, I was on the trail of no lesser man than John Webster; in the second draft of the same piece, with staggering versatility, I had shifted my allegiance to Congreve, and of course conceived my fable in a less serious vein—for it was not Congreve's verse, it was his exquisite prose, that I admired and sought to copy. Even at the age of thirteen I had tried to do justice to the in-

habitants of the famous city of Peebles in the style of the *Book of Snobs*. So I might go on forever, through all my abortive novels, and down to my later plays, of which I think more tenderly, for they were not only conceived at first under the bracing influence of old Dumas, but have met with resurrections: one, strangely bettered by another hand, came on the stage itself and was played by bodily actors: the other, originally known as *Semiramis: a Tragedy*, I have observed on bookstalls under the *alias* of *Prince Otto*. But enough has been said to show by what arts of impersonation and in what purely ventriloquial efforts I first saw my words on paper.

That, like it or not, is the way to learn to write; whether I have profited or not, that is the way. It was so Keats learned, and there was never a finer temperament for literature than Keats's; it was so, if we could trace it out, that all men have learned; and that is why a revival of letters is always accompanied or heralded by a cast back to earlier and fresher models. Perhaps I hear some one cry out: But this is not the way to be original! It is not; nor is there any way but to be born so. Nor yet, if you are born original, is there anything in this training that shall clip the wings of your originality. There can be none more original than Montaigne, neither could any be more unlike Cicero; yet no craftsman can fail to see how much the one must have tried in his time to imitate the other. Burns is the very type of a prime force in letters: he was of all men the most imitative. Shakespeare himself, the imperial, proceeds directly from a school. It is only from a school that we can expect to have good writers; it is almost invariably from a school that great writers, these lawless exceptions, issue. Nor is there anything here that should astonish the considerate. Before he can tell what cadences he truly prefers, the student should have tried all that are possible: before he can choose and preserve a fitting key of words, he should long have practised the literary scales; and it is only after years of such gymnastic that he can sit down at last, legions of words swarming to his call, dozens of turns of phrase simultaneously bidding for his choice, and he himself knowing what he

wants to do and (within the narrow limit of a man's ability) able to do it.

And it is the great point of these imitations that there still shines beyond the student's reach his inimitable model. Let him try as he please, he is still sure of failure; and it is a very old and a very true saying that failure is the only highroad to success. I must have had some disposition to learn; for I clear-sightedly condemned my own performances. I liked doing them indeed; but when they were done, I could see they were rubbish. In consequence, I very rarely showed them even to my friends; and such friends as I chose to be my confidants I must have chosen well, for they had the friendliness to be quite plain with me. "Padding," said one. Another wrote: "I can not understand why you do lyrics so badly." No more could I! Thrice I put myself in the way of a more authoritative rebuff, by sending a paper to a magazine. These were returned; and I was not surprised nor even pained. If they had not been looked at, as (like all amateurs) I suspected was the case, there was no good in repeating the experiment; if they had been looked at—well then I had not yet learned to write, and I must keep on learning and living. Lastly, I had a piece of good fortune which is the occasion of this paper, and by which I was able to see my literature in print, and to measure experimentally how far I stood from the favor of the public.

II

The Speculative Society is a body of some antiquity, and has counted among its members Scott, Brougham, Jeffrey, Horner, Benjamin Constant, Robert Emmet, and many a legal and local celebrity besides. By an accident, variously explained, it has its rooms in the very buildings of the University of Edinburgh: a hall, Turkey-carpeted, hung with pictures, looking, when lighted up at night with fire and candle, like some goodly dining-room; a passage-like library, walled with books in their wire cages; and a corridor with a fireplace, benches, a table,

many prints of famous members, and a mural tablet to the virtues of a former secretary. Here a member can warm himself and loaf and read; here, in defiance of Senatus-consults, he can smoke. The Senatus looks askance at these privileges; looks even with a somewhat vinegar aspect on the whole society; which argues a lack of proportion in the learned mind, for the world, we may be sure, will prize far higher this haunt of dead lions than all the living dogs of the professorate.

I sat one December morning in the library of the Speculative; a very humble-minded youth, though it was a virtue I never had much credit for; yet proud of my privileges as a member of the Spec.; proud of the pipe I was smoking in the teeth of the Senatus; and in particular, proud of being in the next room to three very distinguished students, who were then conversing beside the corridor fire. One of these has now his name on the back of several volumes, and his voice, I learn, is influential in the law courts. Of the death of the second, you have just been reading what I had to say. And the third also has escaped out of that battle of life in which he fought so hard, it may be so unwisely. They were all three, as I have said, notable students; but this was the most conspicuous. Wealthy, handsome, ambitious, adventurous, diplomatic, a reader of Balzac, and, of all men that I have known, the most like to one of Balzac's characters; he led a life, and was attended by an ill fortune, that could be properly set forth only in the *Comédie Humaine*. He had then his eye on Parliament; and soon after the time of which I write, he made a showy speech at a political dinner, was cried up to heaven next day in the *Courant*, and the day after was dashed lower than earth with a charge of plagiarism in the *Scotsman*. Report would have it (I daresay, very wrongly) that he was betrayed by one in whom he particularly trusted, and that the author of the charge had learned its truth from his own lips. Thus, at least, he was up one day on a pinnacle, admired and envied by all; and the next, though still but a boy, he was publicly disgraced. The blow would have broken a less finely tempered spirit; and even him I suppose it rendered

reckless; for he took flight to London, and there, in a fast club, disposed of the bulk of his considerable patrimony in the space of one winter. For years thereafter he lived I know not how; always well dressed, always in good hotels and good society, always with empty pockets. The charm of his manner may have stood him in good stead; but though my own manners are very agreeable, I have never found in them a source of livelihood; and to explain the miracle of his continued existence, I must fall back upon the theory of the philosopher, that in his case, as in all of the same kind, "there was a suffering relative in the background." From this genteel eclipse he reappeared upon the scene, and presently sought me out in the character of a generous editor. It is in this part that I best remember him; tall, slender, with a not ungraceful stoop; looking quite like a refined gentleman, and quite like an urbane adventurer; smiling with an engaging ambiguity; cocking at you one peaked eyebrow with a great appearance of finesse; speaking low and sweet and thick, with a touch of burr; telling strange tales with singular deliberation and, to a patient listener, excellent effect. After all these ups and downs, he seemed still, like the rich student that he was of yore, to breathe of money; seemed still perfectly sure of himself and certain of his end. Yet he was then upon the brink of his last overthrow. He had set himself to found the strangest thing in our society: one of those periodical sheets from which men suppose themselves to learn opinions; in which young gentlemen from the universities are encouraged, at so much a line, to garble facts, insult foreign nations and calumniate private individuals; and which are now the source of glory, so that if a man's name be often enough printed there, he becomes a kind of demigod; and people will pardon him when he talks back and forth, as they do for Mr. Gladstone; and crowd him to suffocation on railway platforms, as they did the other day to General Boulanger; and buy his literary works, as I hope you have just done for me. Our fathers, when they were upon some great enterprise, would sacrifice a life; building, it may be, a favorite slave into the foundations of their palace. It was with his own

life that my companion disarmed the envy of the gods. He fought his paper single-handed: trusting no one, for he was something of a cynic; up early and down late, for he was nothing of a sluggard; daily ear-wigging influential men, for he was a master of ingratiation. In that slender and silken fellow there must have been a rare vein of courage, that he should thus have died at his employment; and doubtless ambition spoke loudly in his ear, and doubtless love also, for it seems there was a marriage in his view had he succeeded. But he died, and his paper died after him; and of all this grace, and tact, and courage, it must seem to our blind eyes as if there had come literally nothing.

These three students sat, as I was saying, in the corridor, under the mural tablet that records the virtues of Macbean, the former secretary. We would often smile at that ineloquent memorial, and thought it a poor thing to come into the world at all and leave no more behind one than Macbean. And yet of these three, two are gone and have left less; and this book, perhaps, when it is old and foxy, and some one picks it up in a corner of a book-shop, and glances through it, smiling at the old, graceless turns of speech, and perhaps for the love of *Alma Mater* (which may be still extant and flourishing) buys it, not without haggling, for some pence—this book may alone preserve a memory of James Walter Ferrier and Robert Glasgow Brown.

Their thoughts ran very differently on that December morning; they were all on fire with ambition: and when they had called me in to them, and made me a sharer in their design, I too became drunken with pride and hope. We were to found a University magazine. A pair of little, active brothers—Livingstone by name, great skippers on the foot, great rubbers of the hands, who kept a book-shop over against the University building—had been debauched to play the part of publishers. We four were to be conjunct editors and, what was the main point of the concern, to print our own works; while, by every rule of arithmetic—that flatterer of credulity—the adventure must succeed and bring great profit. Well, well: it was a

bright vision. I went home that morning walking upon air. To have been chosen by these three distinguished students was to me the most unspeakable advance; it was my first draft of consideration; it reconciled me to myself and to my fellow men; and as I steered round the railings at the Tron, I could not withhold my lips from smilingly publicly. Yet, in the bottom of my heart, I knew that magazine would be a grim fiasco; I knew it would not be worth reading; I knew, even if it were, that nobody would read it; and I kept wondering how I should be able, upon my compact income of twelve pounds per annum, payable monthly, to meet my share in the expense. It was a comfortable thought to me that I had a father.

The magazine appeared, in a yellow cover, which was the best part of it, for at least it was unassuming; it ran four months in undisturbed obscurity, and died without a gasp. The first number was edited by all four of us with prodigious bustle; the second fell principally into the hands of Ferrier and me; the third I edited alone; and it has long been a solemn question who it was that edited the fourth. It would perhaps be still more difficult to say who read it. Poor yellow sheet, that looked so hopefully in the Livingstones' window! Poor, harmless paper, that might have gone to print a *Shakespeare* on, and was instead so clumsily defaced with nonsense! And, shall I say, Poor Editors? I can not pity myself, to whom it was all pure gain. It was no news to me, but only the wholesome confirmation of my judgment, when the magazine struggled into half-birth, and instantly sickened and subsided into night. I had sent a copy to the lady with whom my heart was at that time somewhat engaged, and who did all that in her lay to break it; and she, with some tact, passed over the gift and my cherished contributions in silence. I will not say that I was pleased at this; but I will tell her now, if by any chance she takes up the work of her former servant, that I thought the better of her taste. I cleared the decks after this lost engagement; had the necessary interview with my father, which passed off not amiss; paid over my share of the expense to the two little, active brothers, who rubbed their hands as much,

but methought skipped rather less than formerly, having perhaps, these two also, embarked upon the enterprise with some graceful illusions; and then, reviewing the whole episode, I told myself that the time was not yet ripe, nor the man ready; and to work I went again with my penny version-books, having fallen back in one day from the printed author to the manuscript student.

III

From this defunct periodical I am going to reprint one of my own papers. The poor little piece is all tail-foremost. I have done my best to straighten its array, I have pruned it fearlessly, and it remains invertebrate and wordy. No self-respecting magazine would print the thing; and here you behold it in a bound volume, not for any worth of its own, but for the sake of the man whom it purports dimly to represent and some of whose sayings it preserves; so that in this volume of Memories and Portraits, Robert Young, the Swanston gardener, may stand alongside of John Todd, the Swanston shepherd. Not that John and Robert drew very close together in their lives; for John was rough, he smelt of the windy brae; and Robert was gentle, and smacked of the garden in the hollow. Perhaps it is to my shame that I liked John the better of the two; he had grit and dash, and that salt of Old Adam that pleases men with any savage inheritance of blood; and he was a wayfarer besides, and took my gipsy fancy. But however that may be, and however Robert's profile may be blurred in the boyish sketch that follows, he was a man of a most quaint and beautiful nature, whom, if it were possible to recast a piece of work so old, I should like well to draw again with a maturer touch. And as I think of him and of John, I wonder in what other country two such men would be found dwelling together, in a hamlet of some twenty cottages, in the woody fold of a green hill.

CHAPTER V

AN OLD SCOTCH GARDENER

I THINK I might almost have said the last: somewhere, indeed, in the uttermost glens of the Lammermuir or among the southwestern hills there may yet linger a decrepit representative of this bygone good fellowship; but as far as actual experience goes, I have only met one man in my life who might fitly be quoted in the same breath with Andrew Fairservice—though without his vices. He was a man whose very presence could impart a savor of quaint antiquity to the baldest and most modern flower-pots. There was a dignity about his tall stooping form, and an earnestness in his wrinkled face that recalled Don Quixote; but a Don Quixote who had come through the training of the Covenant, and been nourished in his youth on *Walker's Lives* and *The Hind Let Loose.*

Now, as I could not bear to let such a man pass away with no sketch preserved of his old-fashioned virtues, I hope the reader will take this as an excuse for the present paper, and judge as kindly as he can the infirmities of my description. To me, who find it so difficult to tell the little that I know, he stands essentially as a *genius loci.* It is impossible to separate his spare form and old straw hat from the garden in the lap of the hill, with its rocks overgrown with clematis, its shadowy walks, and the splendid breath of champaign that one saw from the northwest corner. The garden and gardener seem part and parcel of each other. When I take him from his right surroundings and try to make him appear for me on paper, he looks unreal and phantasmal: the best that I can say may convey some notion to those that never saw him, but to me it will be ever impotent.

The first time that I saw him, I fancy Robert was pretty

old already: he had certainly begun to use his years as a stalking horse. Latterly he was beyond all the impudencies of logic, considering a reference to the parish register worth all the reasons in the world. *"I am old and well stricken in years,"* he was wont to say; and I never found any one bold enough to answer the argument. Apart from this vantage that he kept over all who were not yet octogenarian, he had some other drawbacks as a gardener. He shrank the very place he cultivated. The dignity and reduced gentility of his appearance made the small garden cut a sorry figure. He was full of tales of greater situations in his younger days. He spoke of castles and parks with a humbling familiarity. He told of places where undergardeners had trembled at his looks, where there were meres and swanneries, labyrinths of walk and wildernesses of sad shrubbery in his control, till you could not help feeling that it was condescension on his part to dress your humbler garden plots. You were thrown at once into an invidious position. You felt that you were profiting by the needs of dignity, and that his poverty and not his will consented to your vulgar rule. Involuntarily you compared yourself with the swineherd that made Alfred watch his cakes, or some bloated citizen who may have given his sons and his condescension to the fallen Dionysius. Nor were the disagreeables purely fanciful and metaphysical, for the sway that he exercised over your feelings he extended to your garden, and, through the garden, to your diet. He would trim a hedge, throw away a favorite plant, or fill the most favored and fertile section of the garden with a vegetable that none of us could eat, in supreme contempt for our opinion. If you asked him to send you in one of your own artichokes, *"That I will, mem,"* he would say, *"with pleasure, for it is mair blessed to give than to receive."* Ay, and even when, by extra twisting of the screw, we prevailed on him to prefer our commands to his own inclination, and he went away, stately and sad, professing that *"our will was his pleasure,"* but yet reminding us that he would do it *"with feelin's"*—even then, I say, the triumphant master felt humbled in his triumph, felt that he ruled on suf-

ferance only, that he was taking a mean advantage of the other's low estate, and that the whole scene had been one of those "slights that patient merit of the unworthy takes."

In flowers his taste was old-fashioned and catholic; affecting sunflowers and dahlias, wallflowers and roses, and holding in supreme aversion whatsoever was fantastic, new-fashioned or wild. There was one exception to this sweeping ban. Foxgloves, though undoubtedly guilty on the last count, he not only spared, but loved; and when the shrubbery was being thinned, he stayed his hand and dexterously manipulated his bill in order to save every stately stem. In boyhood, as he told me once, speaking in that tone that only actors and the old-fashioned common folk can use nowadays, his heart grew "*proud*" within him when he came on a burn-course among the braes of Manor that shone purple with their graceful trophies: and not all his apprenticeship and practise for so many years of precise gardening had banished these boyish recollections from his heart. Indeed, he was a man keenly alive to the beauty of all that was bygone. He abounded in old stories of his boyhood and kept pious account of all his former pleasures: and when he went (on a holiday) to visit one of the fabled great places of the earth where he had served before he came back full of little pre-Raphaelite reminiscences that showed real passion for the past, such as might have shaken hands with Hazlitt or Jean-Jacques.

But however his sympathy with his old feelings might affect his liking for the foxgloves, the very truth was that he scorned all flowers together. They were but garnishings, childish toys, trifling ornaments for ladies' chimney-shelves. It was toward his cauliflowers and peas and cabbage that his heart grew warm. His preference for the more useful growths was such that cabbages were found invading the flower-pots, and an outpost of savoys was once discovered in the center of the lawn. He would prelect over some thriving plant with wonderful enthusiasm, piling reminiscence on reminiscences of former and perhaps yet finer specimens. Yet even then he did not let the

credit leave himself. He had, indeed, raised *"finer o' them;"* but it seemed that no one else had been favored with a like success. All other gardeners, in fact, were mere foils to his own superior attainments; and he would recount, with perfect soberness of voice and visage, how so and so had wondered, and such another could scarcely give credit to his eyes. Nor was it with his rivals only that he parted praise and blame. If you remarked how well a plant was looking, he would gravely touch his hat and thank you with solemn unction; all credit in the matter falling to him. If, on the other hand, you called his attention to some back-going vegetable, he would quote Scripture: *"Paul may plant and Apollos may water;"* all blame being left to Providence, on the score of deficient rain or untimely frosts.

There was one thing in the garden that shared his preference with his favorite cabbages and rhubarb, and that other was the beehive. Their sound, their industry, perhaps their sweet product also, had taken hold of his imagination and heart, whether by way of memory or no I can not say, although perhaps the bees too were linked to him by some recollection of Manor braes and his country childhood. Nevertheless, he was too chary of his personal safety or (let me rather say) his personal dignity to mingle in any active office toward them. But he could stand by while one of the contemned rivals did the work for him, and protest that it was quite safe in spite of his own considerate distance and the cries of the distressed assistant. In regard to bees, he was rather a man of word than deed, and some of his most striking sentences had the bees for text. *"They are indeed wonderfu' creatures, mem,"* he said once. *"They just mind me o' what the Queen of Sheba said to Solomon—and I think she said it wi' a sigh —'The half of it hath not been told unto me.'"*

As far as the Bible goes, he was deeply read. Like the old Covenanters, of whom he was a worthy representative, his mouth was full of sacred quotations; it was the book that he had studied most and thought upon most deeply. To many people in his station the Bible, and perhaps Burns, are the only books of any vital literary merit that

they read, feeding themselves, for the rest, on the draff of country newspapers, and the very instructive but not very palatable pabulum of some cheap educational series. This was Robert's position. All day long he had dreamed of the Hebrew stories, and his head had been full of Hebrew poetry and Gospel ethics; until they had struck deep root into his heart, and the very expressions had become a part of him; so that he rarely spoke without some antique idiom of Scripture mannerism that gave a raciness to the merest trivialities of talk. But the influence of the Bible did not stop here. There was more in Robert than quaint phrase and ready store of reference. He was imbued with a spirit of peace and love: he interposed between man and wife: he threw himself between the angry, touching his hat the while with all the ceremony of an usher: he protected the birds from everybody but himself, seeing, I suppose, a great difference between official execution and wanton sport. His mistress telling him one day to put some ferns into his master's particular corner, and adding, "Though, indeed, Robert, he doesn't deserve them, for he wouldn't help me to gather them," *"Eh, mem,"* replies Robert, *"but I wouldnae say that, for I think he's just a most deservin' gentleman."* Again, two of our friends, who were on intimate terms, and accustomed to use language to each other, somewhat without the bounds of the parliamentary, happened to differ about the position of a seat in the garden. The discussion, as was usual when these two were at it, soon waxed tolerably insulting on both sides. Every one accustomed to such controversies several times a day was quietly enjoying this prize-fight of somewhat abusive wit—every one but Robert, to whom the perfect good faith of the whole quarrel seemed unquestionable, and who, after having waited till his conscience would suffer him to wait no more, and till he expected every moment that the disputants would fall to blows, cut suddenly in with tones of almost tearful entreaty: *"Eh, but, gentlemen, I read hae nae mair words about it!"* One thing was noticeable about Robert's religion: it was neither dogmatic nor sectarian. He never expatiated (at least, in my hearing) on the doctrines of his

creed, and he never condemned anybody else. I have no doubt that he held all Roman Catholics, Atheists, and Mahometans as considerably out of it; I don't believe he had any sympathy for Prelacy; and the natural feelings of the man must have made him a little sore about Free-Churchism; but at least, he never talked about these views, never grew controversially noisy, and never openly aspersed the belief or practise of anybody. Now all this is not generally characteristic of Scotch piety; Scotch sects being churches militant with a vengeance, and Scotch believers perpetual crusaders the one against the other, and missionaries the one to the other. Perhaps Robert's originally tender heart was what made the difference; or, perhaps, his solitary and pleasant labor among fruits and flowers had taught him a more sunshiny creed than those whose work is among the tares of fallen humanity; and the soft influences of the garden had entered deep into his spirit,

> "Annihilating all that's made
> To a green thought in a green shade."

But I could go on forever chronicling his golden sayings or telling of his innocent and living piety. I had meant to tell of his cottage, with the German pipe hung reverently above the fire, and the shell box that he had made for his son, and of which he would say pathetically: *"He was real pleased wi' it at first, but I think he's got a kind o' tired o' it now"*—the son being then a man of about forty. But I will let all these pass. "'Tis more significant: he's dead." The earth, that he had digged so much in his life, was dug out by another for himself; and the flowers that he had tended drew their life still from him, but in a new and nearer way. A bird flew about the open grave, as if it too wished to honor the obsequies of one who had so often quoted Scripture in favor of its kind: "Are not two sparrows sold for one farthing, and yet not one of them falleth to the ground."

Yes, he is dead. But the kings did not rise in the place of death to greet him "with taunting proverbs" as they rose to greet the haughty Babylonian; for in his life he was lowly, and a peacemaker and a servant of God.

CHAPTER VI

PASTORAL

TO leave home in early life is to be stunned and quickened with novelties; but when years have come, it only casts a more endearing light upon the past. As in those composite photographs of Mr. Galton's, the image of each new sitter brings out but the more clearly the central features of the race; when once youth has flown, each new impression only deepens the sense of nationality and the desire of native places. So may some cadet of Royal Ecossais or the Albany Regiment, as he mounted guard about French citadels, so may some officer marching his company of the Scots-Dutch among the polders, have felt the soft rains of the Hebrides upon his brow, or started in the ranks at the remembered aroma of peat-smoke. And the rivers of home are dear in particular to all men. This is as old as Naaman, who was jealous for Abana and Pharpar: it is confined to no race nor country, for I know one of Scottish blood but a child of Suffolk whose fancy still lingers about the lilied lowland waters of that shire. But the streams of Scotland are incomparable in themselves—or I am only the more Scottish to suppose so—and their sound and color dwell forever in the memory. How often and willingly do I not look again in fancy on Tummel, or Manor, or the talking Airdle, or Dee swirling in its lyn; on the bright burn of Kinnaird, or the golden burn that pours and sulks in the den behind Kingussie! I think shame to leave out one of these enchantresses, but the list would grow too long if I remembered all; only I may not forget Allan Water, nor birch-wetting Roggie, nor yet Almond; nor, for all its pollutions, that Water of Leith of the many and well-named mills—Bell's Mills, and Cannon Mills, and Silver Mills; nor Redford Burn of pleasant mem-

ories; nor yet, for all its smallness, that nameless trickle that springs in the green bosom of Allermuir, and is fed from Halkerside with a perennial teacupful, and threads the moss under the Shearer's Knowe, and makes one pool there, overhung by a rock, where I loved to sit and make bad verses, and is then kidnaped in its infancy by subterranean pipes for the service of the sea-beholding city in the plain. From many points in the moss you may see at one glance its whole course and that of all its tributaries; the geographer of this Lilliput may visit all its corners without sitting down, and not yet begin to be breathed; Shearer's Knowe and Halkerside are but names of adjacent cantons on a single shoulder of a hill, as names are squandered (it would seem to the inexpert, in superfluity) upon these upland sheepwalks; a bucket would receive the whole discharge of the toy river; it would take it an appreciable time to fill your morning bath; for the most part, besides, it soaks unseen through the moss; and yet for the sake of auld lang syne, and the figure of a certain *genius loci,* I am condemned to linger a while in fancy by its shores; and if the nymph (who can not be above a span in stature) will but inspire my pen, I would gladly carry the reader along with me.

John Todd, when I knew him, was already "the oldest herd on the Pentlands," and had been all his days faithful to that curlew-scattering, sheep-collecting life. He remembered the droving days, when the drove roads, that now lie green and solitary through the heather, were thronged thoroughfares. He had himself often marched flocks into England, sleeping on the hillsides with his caravan; and by his account it was a rough business not without danger. The drove roads lay apart from habitation; the drovers met in the wilderness, as to-day the deep-sea fishers meet off the banks in the solitude of the Atlantic; and in the one as in the other case rough habits and fist-law were the rule. Crimes were committed, sheep filched, and drovers robbed and beaten; most of which offenses had a moorland burial and were never heard of in the courts of justice. John, in those days, was at least once attacked—by two men after his watch—and at least

once, betrayed by his habitual anger, fell under the danger of the law and was clapped into some rustic prison-house, the doors of which he burst in the night and was no more heard of in that quarter. When I knew him, his life had fallen in quieter places, and he had no cares beyond the dulness of his dogs and the inroads of pedestrians from town. But for a man of his propensity to wrath there were enough; he knew neither rest nor peace, except by snatches; in the gray of the summer morning, and already from far up the hill, he would wake the "toun" with the sound of his shoutings; and in the lambing time, his cries were not yet silenced late at night. This wrathful voice of a man unseen might be said to haunt that quarter of the Pentlands, an audible bogie; and no doubt it added to the fear in which men stood of John a touch of something legendary. For my own part, he was at first my enemy, and I, in my character of a rambling boy, his natural abhorrence. It was long before I saw him near at hand, knowing him only by some sudden blast of bellowing from far above, bidding me "c'way oot amang the sheep." The quietest recesses of the hill harbored this ogre: I skulked in my favorite wilderness like a Cameronian of the Killing Time, and John Todd was my Claverhouse, and his dogs my questing dragoons. Little by little we dropped into civilities; his hail at sight of me began to have less of the ring of a war-slogan; soon, we never met but he produced his snuff-box, which was with him, like the calumet with the Red Indian, a part of the heraldry of peace; and at length, in the ripeness of time, we grew to be a pair of friends, and when I lived alone in these parts in the winter, it was a settled thing for John to "give me a cry" over the garden wall as he set forth upon his evening round, and for me to overtake and bear him company.

That dread voice of his that shook the hills when he was angry, fell in ordinary talk very pleasantly upon the ear, with a kind of honeyed, friendly whine, not far off singing, that was eminently Scottish. He laughed, not very often, and when he did, with a sudden, loud haw-haw, hearty but somehow joyless, like an echo from a rock. His face was permanently set and colored; ruddy and

stiff with weathering; more like a picture than a face; yet with a certain strain and a threat of latent anger in the expression, like that of a man trained too fine and harassed with perpetual vigilance. He spoke in the richest dialect of Scotch I ever heard; the words in themselves were a pleasure and often a surprise to me, so that I often came back from one of our patrols with new acquisitions; and this vocabulary he would handle like a master, stalking a little before me, "beard on shoulder," the plaid hanging loosely about him, the yellow staff clapped under his arm, and guiding me uphill by that devious, tactical ascent which seems peculiar to men of his trade. I might count him with the best talkers; only that talking Scotch and talking English seem incomparable acts. He touched on nothing at least, but he adorned it; when he narrated, the scene was before you; when he spoke (as he did mostly) of his own antique business, the thing took on a color of romance and curiosity that was surprising. The clans of sheep with their particular territories on the hill, and how, in the yearly killings and purchases, each must be proportionately thinned and strengthened; the midnight business of animals, the signs of the weather, the cares of the snowy season, the exquisite stupidity of sheep, the exquisite cunning of the dogs: all these he could present so humanly, and with so much old experience and living gusto, that weariness was excluded. And in the midst he would suddenly straighten his bowed back, the stick would fly abroad in demonstration, and the sharp thunder of his voice roll out a long itinerary for the dogs, so that you saw at last the use of that great wealth of names for every knowe and howe upon the hillside; and the dogs, having harkened with lowered tails and raised faces, would run up their flags again to the masthead and spread themselves upon the indicated circuit. It used to fill me with wonder how they could follow and retain so long a story. But John denied these creatures all intelligence; they were the constant butt of his passion and contempt; it was just possible to work with the like of them, he said—not more than possible. And then he would expand upon the subject of the really good dogs

that he had known, and the one really good dog that he had himself possessed. He had been offered forty pounds for it; but a good collie was worth more than that, more than anything, to a "herd"; he did the herd's work for him. "As for the like of them!" he would cry, and scornfully indicate the scouring tails of his assistants.

Once—I translate John's Lallan, for I can not do it justice, being born *Britannis in montibus,* indeed, but alas! *inerudito sæculo*—once, in the days of his good dog, he had bought some sheep in Edinburgh, and on the way out, the road being crowded, two were lost. This was a reproach to John, and a slur upon the dog; and both were alive to their misfortune. Word came, after some days, that a farmer about Braid had found a pair of sheep; and thither went John and the dog to ask for restitution. But the farmer was a hard man and stood upon his rights. "How were they marked?" he asked; and since John had bought right and left from many sellers and had no notion of the marks—"Very well," said the farmer, "then it's only right that I should keep them."—"Well," said John, "it's a fact that I cannae tell the sheep; but if my dog can, will ye let me have them?" The farmer was honest as well as hard, and besides I daresay he had little fear of the ordeal; so he had all the sheep upon his farm into one large park, and turned John's dog into their midst. That hairy man of business knew his errand well; he knew that John and he had bought two sheep and (to their shame) lost them about Boroughmuirhead; he knew besides (the Lord knows how, unless by listening) that they were come to Braid for their recovery; and without pause or blunder singled out, first one and then another, the two waifs. It was that afternoon the forty pounds were offered and refused. And the shepherd and his dog—what do I say? the true shepherd and his man—set off together by Fairmilehead in jocund humor, and "smiled to ither" all the way home, with the two recovered ones before them. So far, so good; but intelligence may be abused. The dog, as he is by little man's inferior in mind, is only by little his superior in virtue; and John had another collie tale of quite a different complexion. At the foot of the moss

behind Kirk Yetton (Caer Ketton, wise men say) there is a scrog of low wood and a pool with a dam for washing sheep. John was one day lying under a bush in the scrog, when he was aware of a collie on the far hillside skulking down through the deepest of the heather with obtrusive stealth. He knew the dog; knew him for a clever, rising practitioner from quite a distant farm; one whom perhaps he had coveted as he saw him masterfully steering flocks to market. But what did the practitioner so far from home? and why this guilty and secret maneuvering toward the pool?—for it was toward the pool that he was heading. John lay the closer under his bush, and presently saw the dog come forth upon the margin, look all about to see if he were anywhere observed, plunge in and repeatedly wash himself over head and ears, and then (but now openly and with tail in air) strike homeward over the hills. That same night word was sent his master, and the rising practitioner, shaken up from where he lay, all innocence before the fire, was had out to a dykeside and promptly shot; for alas! he was that foulest of criminals under trust, a sheep-eater; and it was from the maculation of sheep's blood that he had come so far to cleanse himself in the pool behind Kirk Yetton.

A trade that touches nature, one that lies at the foundations of life, in which we have all had ancestors employed, so that on a hint of it ancestral memories revive, lends itself to literary use, vocal or written. The fortune of a tale lies not alone in the skill of him that writes, but as much, perhaps, in the inherited experience of him who reads; and when I hear with a particular thrill of things that I have never done or seen, it is as one of that innumerable army of my ancestors rejoicing in past deeds. Thus novels begin to touch not the fine *dilettanti,* but the gross mass of mankind, when they leave off to speak of parlors and shades of manner and still-born niceties of motive, and begin to deal with fighting, sailoring, adventure, death or child-birth; and thus ancient outdoor crafts and occupations, whether Mr. Hardy wields the shepherd's crook or Count Tolstoi swings the scythe, lift romance into a near neighborhood with epic. These aged things

have on them the dew of man's morning; they lie near, not so much to us, the semi-artificial flowerets, as to the trunk and aboriginal taproot of the race. A thousand interests spring up in the process of the ages and a thousand perish; that is now an eccentricity or a lost art which was once the fashion of an empire; and those only are perennial matters that rouse us to-day, and that roused men in all epochs of the past. There is a certain critic, not indeed of execution but of matter, whom I dare be known to set before the best: a certain low-browed, hairy gentleman, at first a percher in the fork of trees, next (as they relate) a dweller in caves, and whom I think I see squatting in cave-mouths, of a pleasant afternoon, to munch his berries —his wife, that accomplished lady, squatting by his side: his name I never heard, but he is often described as Probably Arboreal, which may serve for recognition. Each has his own tree of ancestors, but at the top of all sits Probably Arboreal; in all our veins there run some minims of this old, wild, tree-top blood; our civilized nerves still tingle with his rude terrors and pleasures; and to that which would have moved our common ancestor, all must obediently thrill.

We have not so far to climb to come to shepherds; and it may be I had one for an ascendent who has largely molded me. But yet I think I owe my taste for that hillside business rather to the art and interest of John Todd. He it was that made it live for me, as the artist can make all things live. It was through him the simple strategy of massing sheep upon a snowy evening, with its attendant scampering of earnest, shaggy aides-de-camp, was an affair that I never wearied of seeing, and that I never weary of recalling to mind: the shadow of the night darkening on the hills, inscrutable black blots of snow shower moving here and there like night already come, huddles of yellow sheep and dartings of black dogs upon the snow, a bitter air that took you by the throat, unearthly harpings of the wind along the moors; and for centerpiece to all these features and influences, John winding up the brae, keeping his captain's eye upon all sides, and breaking, ever and again, into a spasm of bel-

lowing that seemed to make the evening bleaker. It is thus that I still see him in my mind's eye, perched on the hump of the declivity not far from Halkerside, his staff in airy flourish, his great voice taking hold upon the hills and echoing terror to the lowlands; I, meanwhile, standing somewhat back, until the fit should be over, and, with a pinch of snuff, my friend relapse into his easy, even conversation.

CHAPTER VII

THE MANSE

I HAVE named, among many rivers that make music in my memory, that dirty Water of Leith. Often and often I desire to look upon it again; and the choice of a point of view is easy to me. It should be at a certain water-door, embowered in shrubbery. The river is there dammed back for the service of the flour-mill just below, so that it lies deep and darkling, and the sand slopes into brown obscurity with a glint of gold; and it has but newly been recruited by the borrowings of the snuff-mill just above, and these, tumbling merrily in, shake the pool to its black heart, fill it with drowsy eddies, and set the curded froth of many other mills solemnly steering to and fro upon the surface. Or so it was when I was young; for change, and the masons, and the pruning-knife, have been busy; and if I could hope to repeat a cherished experience, it must be on many and impossible conditions. I must choose, as well as the point of view, a certain moment in my growth, so that the scale may be exaggerated, and the trees on the steep opposite side be seen to climb to heaven, and the sand by the water-door, where I am standing, seem as low as Styx. And I must choose the season also, so that the valley may be brimmed like a cup with sunshine and the song of birds;—and the year of grace, so that when I turn to leave the riverside I may find the old manse and its inhabitants unchanged.

It was a place in that time like no other: the garden cut into provinces by a great hedge of beech, and overlooked by the church and the terrace of the churchyard, where the tombstones were thick, and after nightfall "spunkies" might be seen to dance, at least by children; flower-pots lying warm in sunshine, laurels and the great yew making elsewhere a pleasing horror of shade; the

smell of water rising from all round, with an added tang of paper-mills; the sound of water everywhere, and the sound of mills—the wheel and the dam singing their alternate strain; the birds on every bush and from every corner of the overhanging woods pealing out their notes until the air throbbed with them; and in the midst of this, the manse. I see it, by the standard of my childish stature, as a great and roomy house. In truth, it was not so large as I supposed, not yet so convenient, and, standing where it did, it is difficult to suppose that it was healthful. Yet a large family of stalwart sons and tall daughters was housed and reared, and came to man and womanhood in that nest of little chambers; so that the face of the earth was peppered with the children of the manse, and letters with outlandish stamps became familiar to the local postman, and the walls of the little chambers brightened with the wonders of the East. The dullest could see this was a house that had a pair of hands in divers foreign places: a well-beloved house—its image fondly dwelt on by many travelers.

Here lived an ancestor of mine, who was a herd of men. I read him, judging with older criticism the report of childish observation, as a man of singular simplicity of nature; unemotional, and hating the display of what he felt; standing contented on the old ways; a lover of his life and innocent habits to the end. We children admired him: partly for his beautiful face and silver hair, for none more than children are concerned for beauty, and above all for beauty in the old; partly for the solemn light in which we beheld him once a week, the observed of all observers, in the pulpit. But his strictness and distance, the effect, I now fancy of old age, slow blood, and settled habit, oppressed us with a kind of terror. When not abroad, he sat much alone, writing sermons or letters to his scattered family in a dark and cold room with a library of bloodless books—or so they seemed in those days, although I have some of them now on my own shelves and like well enough to read them; and these lonely hours wrapped him in the greater gloom for our imaginations. But the study had a redeeming grace in many Indian pictures, gaudily

colored and dear to young eyes. I can not depict (for I have no such passions now) the greed with which I beheld them; and when I was once sent in to say a psalm to my grandfather, I went, quaking indeed with fear, but at the same time glowing with hope that, if I said it well, he might reward me with an Indian picture.

> "Thy foot He'll not let slide, nor will
> He slumber that thee keeps,"

it ran: a strange conglomerate of the unpronounceable, a sad model to set in childhood before one who was himself to be a versifier, and a task in recitation that really merited reward. And I must suppose the old man thought so too, and was either touched or amused by the performance; for he took me in his arms with most unwonted tenderness, and kissed me, and gave me a little kindly sermon for my psalm; so that, for that day, we were clerk and parson. I was struck by this reception into so tender a surprise that I forgot my disappointment. And indeed the hope was one of those that childhood forges for a pastime, and with no design upon reality. Nothing was more unlikely than that my grandfather should strip himself of one of those pictures, love-gifts and reminders of his absent sons; nothing more unlikely than that he should bestow it upon me. He had no idea of spoiling children, leaving all that to my aunt; he had fared hard himself, and blubbered under the rod in the last century; and his ways were still Spartan for the young. The last word I heard upon his lips was in this Spartan key. He had overwalked in the teeth of an east wind, and was now near the end of his many days. He sat by the dining-room fire, with his white hair, pale face and bloodshot eyes, a somewhat awful figure; and my aunt had given him a dose of our good old Scotch medicine, Dr. Gregory's powder. Now that remedy, as the work of a near kinsman of Rob Roy himself, may have a savor of romance for the imagination; but it comes uncouthly to the palate. The old gentleman had taken it with a wry face; and that being accomplished, sat with perfect simplicity, like a child, munching a "barley-sugar kiss." But when my aunt, hav-

ing the canister open in her hands, proposed to let me share in the sweets, he interfered at once. I had had no Gregory; then I should have no barley-sugar kiss: so he decided with a touch of irritation. And just then the phaeton coming opportunely to the kitchen door—for such was our unlordly fashion—I was taken for the last time from the presence of my grandfather.

Now I often wonder what I have inherited from this old minister. I must suppose indeed, that he was fond of preaching sermons, and so am I, though I never heard it maintained that either of us loved to hear them. He sought health in his youth in the Isle of Wight, and I have sought it in both hemispheres; but whereas he found and kept it, I am still on the quest. He was a great lover of Shakespeare, whom he read aloud, I have been told, with taste; well, I love my Shakespeare, also, and am persuaded I can read him well, though I own I never have been told so. He made embroidery, designing his own patterns; and in that kind of work I never made anything but a kettleholder in Berlin wool, and an odd garter of knitting, which was as black as the chimney before I had done with it. He loved port, and nuts, and porter; and so do I, but they agreed better with my grandfather, which seems to me a breach of contract. He had chalkstones in his fingers; and these, in good time, I may possibly inherit, but I would much rather have inherited his noble presence. Try as I please, I can not join myself on with the reverend doctor; and all the while, no doubt, and even as I write the phrase, he moves in my blood, and whispers words to me, and sits efficient in the very knot and center of my being. In his garden, as I played there, I learned the love of mills—or had I an ancestor a miller?—and a kindness for the neighborhood of graves, as homely things not without their poetry—or had I an ancestor a sexton? But what of the garden where he played himself?—for that, too, was a scene of my education. Some part of me played there in the eighteenth century, and ran races under the green avenue at Pilrig; some part of me trudged up Leith Walk, which was still a country place, and sat on the High School benches, and was thrashed, perhaps, by Dr. Adam.

The house where I spent my youth was not yet thought upon; but we made holiday parties among the cornfields on its site, and ate strawberries and cream near by at a gardener's. All this I had forgotten; only my grandfather remembered and once reminded me. I have forgotten, too, how we grew up, and took orders, and went to our first Ayrshire parish, and fell in love with and married a daughter of Burns's Dr. Smith—"Smith opens out his cauld harangues." I have forgotten, but I was there all the same, and heard stories of Burns at first hand.

And there is a thing stranger than all that; for this *homunculus* or part-man of mine that walked about the eighteenth century with Dr. Balfour in his youth, was in the way of meeting other *homunculos* or part-men, in the persons of my other ancestors. These were of a lower order, and doubtless we looked down upon them duly. But as I went to college with Dr. Balfour, I may have seen the lamp and oil man taking down the shutters from his shop beside the Tron;—we may have had a rabbit-hutch or a bookshelf made for us by a certain carpenter in I know not what wynd of the old, smoky city; or upon some holiday excursion, we may have looked into the windows of a cottage in a flower-garden and seen a certain weaver plying his shuttle. And these were all kinsmen of mine upon the other side; and from the eyes of the lamp and oil man one-half of my unborn father, and one-quarter of myself, looked out upon us as we went by to college. Nothing of all this would cross the mind of the young student, as he posted up the Bridges with trim, stockinged legs, in that city of cocked hats and good Scotch still unadulterated. It would not cross his mind that he should have a daughter; and the lamp and oil man, just then beginning, by a not unnatural metastasis, to bloom into a lighthouse engineer, should have a grandson; and that these two, in the fulness of time, should wed; and some portion of that student himself should survive yet a year or two longer in the person of their child.

But our ancestral adventures are beyond even the arithmetic of fancy; and it is the chief recommendation of long pedigrees, that we can follow backward the careers of our

homunculos and be reminded of our antenatal lives. Our conscious years are but a moment in the history of the elements that build us. Are you a bank-clerk, and do you live at Peckham? It was not always so. And though to-day I am only a man of letters, either tradition errs or I was present when there landed at St. Andrews a French barber-surgeon, to tend the health and the beard of the great Cardinal Beaton; I have shaken a spear in the Debatable Land and shouted the slogan of the Elliots; I was present when a skipper, plying from Dundee, smuggled Jacobites to France after the '15; I was in a West India merchant's office, perhaps next door to Bailie Nichol Jarvie's, and managed the business of a plantation in St. Kitt's; I was with my engineer-grandfather (the son-in-law of the lamp and oil man) when he sailed north about Scotland on the famous cruise that gave us the *Pirate* and the *Lord of the Isles;* I was with him, too, on the Bell Rock, in the fog, when the Smeaton had drifted from her moorings, and the Aberdeen men, pick in hand, had seized upon the only boats, and he must stoop and lap sea-water before his tongue could utter audible words; and once more with him when the Bell Rock beacon took a "thrawe," and his workmen fled into the tower, then nearly finished, and he sat unmoved reading in his Bible—or affecting to read—till one after another slunk back with confusion of countenance to their engineer. Yes, parts of me have seen life, and met adventures, and sometimes met them well. And away in the still cloudier past, the threads that make me up can be traced by fancy into the bosom of thousands and millions of ascendents: Picts who rallied round Macbeth and the old (and highly preferable) system of descent by females, fleërs from before the legions of Agricola, marchers in Pannonian morasses, star-gazers on Chaldean plateaus; and, furthest of all, what face is this that fancy can see peering through the disparted branches? What sleeper in green tree-tops, what muncher of nuts, concludes my pedigree? Probably arboreal in his habits. . . .

And I know not which is the more strange, that I should carry about with me some fibers of my minister-grand-

father; or that in him, as he sat in his cool study, grave, reverend, contented gentleman, there was an aboriginal frisking of the blood that was not his; tree-top memories, like undeveloped negatives, lay dormant in his mind; tree-top instincts awoke and were trod down; and Probably Arboreal (scarce to be distinguished from a monkey) gamboled and chattered in the brain of the old divine.

CHAPTER VIII

MEMORIES OF AN ISLET

THOSE who try to be artists use, time after time, the matter of their recollections, setting and resetting little colored memories of men and scenes, rigging up (it may be) some especial friend in the attire of a buccaneer, and decreeing armies to maneuver, or murder to be done, on the playground of their youth. But the memories are a fairy gift which can not be worn out in using. After a dozen services in various tales, the little sunbright pictures of the past still shine in the mind's eye with not a lineament defaced, not a tint impaired. *Glück und unglück wird gesang,* if Goethe pleases; yet only by endless avatars, the original reembodying after each. So that a writer, in time, begins to wonder at the perdurable life of these impressions; begins, perhaps, to fancy that he wrongs them when he weaves them in with fiction; and looking back on them with ever-growing kindness, puts them at last, substantive jewels, in a setting of their own.

One or two of these pleasant specters I think I have laid. I used one but the other day: a little eyot of dense, fresh-water sand, where I once waded deep in butterburrs, delighting to hear the song of the river on both sides, and to tell myself that I was indeed and at last upon an island. Two of my puppets lay there a summer's day, harkening to the shearers at work in riverside fields and to the drums of the gray old garrison upon the neighboring hill. And this was, I think, done rightly: the place was rightly peopled—and now belongs not to me but to my puppets—for a time at least. In time, perhaps, the puppets will grow faint; the original memory swim up instant as ever; and I shall once more lie in bed, and see the little sandy isle in Allan Water as it is in nature, and the child (that once

The Manse, Colinton
The Early Home of Robert Louis Stevenson

was me) wading there in butterburrs; and wonder at the instance and virgin freshness of that memory; and be pricked again, in season and out of season, by the desire to weave it into art.

There is another isle in my collection, the memory of which besieges me. I put a whole family there, in one of my tales; and later on, threw upon its shores, and condemned to several days of rain and shellfish on its tumbled boulders, the hero of another. The ink is not yet faded; the sound of the sentences is still in my mind's ear; and I am under a spell to write of that island again.

I

The little isle of Earraid lies close in to the southwest corner of the Ross of Mull: the sound of Iona on one side, across which you may see the isle and church of Columba; the open sea to the other, where you shall be able to mark, on a clear, surfy day, the breakers running white on many sunken rocks. I first saw it, or first remember seeing it, framed in the round bull's-eye of a cabin port, the sea lying smooth along its shores like the waters of a lake, the colorless, clear light of the early morning making plain its heathery and rocky hummocks. There stood upon it, in these days, a single rude house of uncemented stones, approached by a pier of wreckwood. It must have been very early, for it was then summer, and in summer, in that latitude, day scarcely withdraws; but even at that hour the house was making a sweet smoke of peats which came to me over the bay, and the barelegged daughters of the cotter were wading by the pier. The same day we visited the shores of the isle in the ship's boats; rowed deep into Fiddler's Hole, sounding as we went; and having taken stock of all possible accommodation, pitched on the northern inlet as the scene of operations. For it was no accident that had brought the lighthouse steamer to anchor in the Bay of Earraid. Fifteen miles away to seaward, a certain black rock stood environed by the Atlantic rollers, the outpost of the Torran reefs. Here was

a tower to be built, and a star lighted, for the conduct of seamen. But as the rock was small, and hard of access, and far from land, the work would be one of years; and my father was now looking for a shore station, where the stones might be quarried and dressed, the men live, and the tender, with some degree of safety, lie at anchor.

I saw Earraid next from the stern thwart of an Iona lugger, Sam Bough and I sitting there cheek by jowl, with our feet upon our baggage, in a beautiful, clear, northern summer eve. And behold! there was now a pier of stone, there were rows of sheds, railways, traveling cranes, a street of cottages, an iron house for the resident engineer, wooden bothies for the men, a stage where the courses of the tower were put together experimentally, and behind the settlement a great gash in the hillside where granite was quarried. In the bay, the steamer lay at her moorings. All day long there hung about the place the music of chinking tools; and even in the dead of night, the watchman carried his lantern to and fro in the dark settlement, and could light the pipe of any midnight muser. It was, above all, strange to see Earraid on the Sunday, when the sound of the tools ceased and there fell a crystal quiet. All about the green compound men would be sauntering in their Sunday's best, walking with those lax joints of the reposing toiler, thoughtfully smoking, talking small, as if in honor of the stillness, or harkening to the wailing of the gulls. And it was strange to see our Sabbath services, held, as they were, in one of the bothies, with Mr. Brebner reading at a table, and the congregation perched about in the double tier of sleeping bunks; and to hear the singing of the psalms, "the chapters," the inevitable Spurgeon's sermon, and the old, eloquent lighthouse prayer.

In fine weather, when by the spy-glass on the hill the sea was observed to run low upon the reef, there would be a sound of preparation in the very early morning; and before the sun had risen from behind Ben More, the tender would steam out of the bay. Over fifteen sea-miles of the great blue Atlantic rollers she plowed her way, trailing at her tail a brace of wallowing stone lighters.

The open ocean widened upon either board, and the hills of the mainland began to go down on the horizon, before she came to her unhomely destination, and lay-to at last where the rock clapped its black head above the swell, with the tall iron barrack on its spider legs, and the truncated tower, and the cranes waving their arms, and the smoke of the engine-fire rising in the mid-sea. An ugly reef is this of the Dhu Heartach; no pleasant assemblage of shelves, and pools, and creeks, about which a child might play for a whole summer without weariness, like the Bell Rock, or the Skerryvore, but one oval nodule of black-trap, sparsely bedabbled with an inconspicuous fucus, and alive in every crevice with a dingy insect between a slater and a bug. No other life was there but that of sea-birds, and of the sea itself, that here ran like a millrace, and growled about the outer reef forever, and ever and again, in the calmest weather, roared and spouted on the rock itself. Times were different upon Dhu Heartach when it blew, and the night fell dark, and the neighbor lights of Skerryvore and Rhu-val were quenched in fog, and the men sat prisoned high up in their iron drum, that then resounded with the lashing of the sprays. Fear sat with them in their sea-beleaguered dwelling; and the color changed in anxious faces when some greater billow struck the barrack, and its pillars quivered and sprang under the blow. It was then that the foreman builder, Mr. Goodwillie, whom I see before me still in his rock-habit of undecipherable rags, would get his fiddle down and strike up human minstrelsy amid the music of the storm. But it was in sunshine only that I saw Dhu-Heartach; and it was in sunshine, or the yet lovelier summer afterglow, that the steamer would return to Earraid, plowing an enchanted sea; the obedient lighters, relieved of their deck cargo, riding in her wake more quietly; and the steersman upon each, as she rose on the long swell, standing tall and dark against the shining west.

II

But it was in Earraid itself that I delighted chiefly. The lighthouse settlement scarce encroached beyond its fences; over the top of the first brae the ground was all virgin, the world all shut out, the face of things unchanged by any of man's doings. Here was no living presence, save for the limpets on the rocks, for some old, gray, rain-beaten ram that I might rouse out of a ferny den betwixt two boulders, or for the haunting and the piping of the gulls. It was older than man; it was found so by incoming Celts, and seafaring Norsemen, and Columba's priests. The earthy savor of the bog plants, the rude disorder of the boulders, the inimitable seaside brightness of the air, the brine and the iodine, the lap of the billows among the weedy reefs, the sudden springing up of a great run of dashing surf along the seafront of the isle, all that I saw and felt my predecessors must have seen and felt with scarce a difference. I steeped myself in open air and in past ages.

"Delightful would it be to me to be in *Uchd Ailiun*
On the pinnacle of a rock,
That I might often see
The face of the ocean;
That I might hear the song of the wonderful birds,
Source of happiness;
That I might hear the thunder of the crowding waves
Upon the rocks:
At times at work without compulsion—
This would be delightful;
At times plucking dulse from the rocks;
At times at fishing."

So, about the next island of Iona, sang Columba himself twelve hundred years before. And so might I have sung of Earraid.

And all the while I was aware that this life of sea-bathing and sun-burning was for me but a holiday. In that year cannon were roaring for days together on French battlefields; and I would sit in my isle (I call it

mine, after the use of lovers) and think upon the war, and the loudness of these far-away battles, and the pain of the men's wounds, and the weariness of their marching. And I would think too of that other war which is as old as mankind, and is indeed the life of man: the unsparing war, the grinding slavery of competition; the toil of seventy years, dear-bought bread, precarious honor, the perils and pitfalls, and the poor rewards. It was a long look forward; the future summoned me as with trumpet calls, it warned me back as with a voice of weeping and beseeching; and I thrilled and trembled on the brink of life, like a childish bather on the beach.

There was another young man on Earraid in these days, and we were much together, bathing, clambering on the boulders, trying to sail a boat and spinning round instead in the oily whirlpools of the roost. But the most part of the time we spoke of the great uncharted desert of our futures; wondering together what should there befall us; hearing with surprise the sound of our own voices in the empty vestibule of youth. As far, and as hard, as it seemed then to look forward to the grave, so far it seems now to look backward upon these emotions; so hard to recall justly that loath submission, as of the sacrificial bull, with which we stooped our necks under the yoke of destiny. I met my old companion but the other day; I can not tell of course what he was thinking; but, upon my part, I was wondering to see us both so much at home, and so composed and sedentary in the world: and how much we had gained, and how much we had lost, to attain to that composure; and which had been upon the whole our best estate: when we sat there prating sensibly like men of some experience, or when we shared our timorous and hopeful counsels in a western islet.

CHAPTER IX

THOMAS STEVENSON, CIVIL ENGINEER

THE death of Thomas Stevenson will mean not very much to the general reader. His service to mankind took on forms of which the public knows little and understands less. He came seldom to London, and then only as a task, remaining always a stranger and a convinced provincial; putting up for years at the same hotel where his father had gone before him; faithful for long to the same restaurant, the same church, and the same theater, chosen simply for propinquity; steadfastly refusing to dine out. He had a circle of his own, indeed, at home; few men were more beloved in Edinburgh, where he breathed an air that pleased him; and wherever he went, in railway carriages or hotel smoking-rooms, his strange, humorous vein of talk, and his transparent honesty, raised him up friends and admirers. But to the general public and the world of London, except about the parliamentary committee-rooms, he remained unknown. All the time, his lights were in every part of the world, guiding the mariner; his firm were consulting engineers to the Indian, the New Zealand, and the Japanese Lighthouse Boards, so that Edinburgh was a world center for that branch of applied science; in Germany, he had been called "the Nestor of lighthouse illumination;" even in France, where his claims were long denied, he was at last, on the occasion of the late Exposition, recognized and medaled. And to show by one instance the inverted nature of his reputation, comparatively small at home, yet filling the world, a friend of mine was this winter on a visit to the Spanish Main, and was asked by a Peruvian if he "knew Mr. Stevenson the author, because his works were much esteemed in Peru?" My friend supposed the reference was to the writer of tales; but the Peruvian had never heard of *Dr.*

Jekyll; what he had in his eye, what was esteemed in Peru, were the volumes of the engineer.

Thomas Stevenson was born at Edinburgh in the year 1818, the grandson of Thomas Smith, first engineer to the Board of Northern Lights, son of Robert Stevenson, brother of Alan and David; so that his nephew, David Alan Stevenson, joined with him at the time of his death in the engineership, is the sixth of the family who has held, successively or conjointly, that office. The Bell Rock, his father's great triumph, was finished before he was born; but he served under his brother Alan in the building of Skerryvore, the noblest of all extant deep-sea lights; and, in conjunction with his brother David, he added two —the Chickens and Dhu Heartach—to that small number of man's extreme outposts in the ocean. Of shore lights, the two brothers last named erected no fewer than twenty-seven; of beacons,[1] about twenty-five. Many harbors were successfully carried out: one, the harbor of Wick, the chief disaster of my father's life, was a failure; the sea proved too strong for man's arts; and after expedients hitherto unthought of, and on a scale hyper-cyclopean, the work must be deserted, and now stands a ruin in that bleak, God-forsaken bay, ten miles from John-o'-Groat's. In the improvement of rivers the brothers were likewise in a large way of practise over both England and Scotland, nor had any British engineer anything approaching their experience.

It was about this nucleus of his professional labors that all my father's scientific inquiries and inventions centered; these proceeded from, and acted back upon, his daily business. Thus it was as a harbor engineer that he became interested in the propagation and reduction of waves; a difficult subject in regard to which he has left behind him much suggestive matter and some valuable approximate results. Storms were his sworn adversaries, and it was through the study of storms that he approached that of meteorology at large. Many who knew him not otherwise,

[1] In Dr. Murray's admirable new dictionary, I have remarked a flaw *sub voce* Beacon. In its express, technical sense, a beacon may be defined as "a founded, artificial sea-mark, not lighted."

knew—perhaps have in their gardens—his louvre-boarded screen for instruments. But the great achievement of his life was, of course, in optics as applied to lighthouse illumination. Fresnel had done much; Fresnel had settled the fixed light apparatus on a principle that still seems unimprovable; and when Thomas Stevenson stepped in and brought to a comparable perfection the revolving light, a not unnatural jealousy and much painful controversy rose in France. It had its hour; and, as I have told already, even in France it has blown by. Had it not, it would have mattered the less, since all through his life my father continued to justify his claim by fresh advances. New apparatus for lights in new situations was continually being designed with the same unwearied search after perfection, the same nice ingenuity of means; and though the holophotal revolving light perhaps still remains his most elegant contrivance, it is difficult to give it the palm over the much later condensing system, with its thousand possible modifications. The number and value of these improvements entitle their author to the name of one of mankind's benefactors. In all parts of the world a safer landfall awaits the mariner. Two things must be said: and, first, that Thomas Stevenson was no mathematician. Natural shrewdness, a sentiment of optical laws, and a great intensity of consideration led him to just conclusions; but to calculate the necessary formulæ for the instruments he had conceived was often beyond him, and he must fall back on the help of others, notably on that of his cousin and lifelong intimate friend, *emeritus* Professor Swan, of St. Andrews, and his later friend, Professor P. G. Tait. It is a curious enough circumstance, and a great encouragement to others, that a man so ill equipped should have succeeded in one of the most abstract and arduous walks of applied science. The second remark is one that applies to the whole family, and only particularly to Thomas Stevenson from the great number and importance of his inventions: holding as the Stevensons did a Government appointment, they regarded their original work as something due already to the nation, and none of them has ever taken out a patent. It is another cause of the

comparative obscurity of the name: for a patent not only brings in money, it infallibly spreads reputation; and my father's instruments enter anonymously into a hundred light-rooms, and are passed anonymously over in a hundred reports, where the least considerable patent would stand out and tell its author's story.

But the life-work of Thomas Stevenson remains; what we have lost, what we now rather try to recall, is the friend and companion. He was a man of a somewhat antique strain: with a blended sternness and softness that was wholly Scottish and at first somewhat bewildering; with a profound essential melancholy of disposition and (what often accompanies it) the most humorous geniality in company; shrewd and childish; passionately attached, passionately prejudiced; a man of many extremes, many faults of temper, and no very stable foothold for himself among life's troubles. Yet he was a wise adviser; many men, and these not inconsiderable, took counsel with him habitually. "I sat at his feet," writes one of these, "when I asked his advice, and when the broad brow was set in thought and the firm mouth said his say, I always knew that no man could add to the worth of the conclusion." He had excellent taste, though whimsical and partial; collected old furniture and delighted specially in sunflowers long before the days of Mr. Wilde; took a lasting pleasure in prints and pictures; was a devout admirer of Thomson of Duddingston at a time when few shared the taste; and though he read little, was constant to his favorite books. He had never any Greek; Latin he happily retaught himself after he had left school, where he was a mere consistent idler: happily, I say, for Lactantius, Vossius, and Cardinal Bona were his chief authors. The first he must have read for twenty years uninterruptedly, keeping it near him in his study, and carrying it in his bag on journeys. Another old theologian, Brown of Wamphray, was often in his hands. When he was indisposed, he had two books, *Guy Mannering* and *The Parent's Assistant*, of which he never wearied. He was a strong Conservative, or, as he preferred to call himself, a Tory; except in so far as his views were modified by a hot-headed chival-

rous sentiment for women. He was actually in favor of a marriage law under which any woman might have a divorce for the asking, and no man on any ground whatever; and the same sentiment found another expression in a Magdalen Mission in Edinburgh, founded and largely supported by himself. This was but one of the many channels of his public generosity; his private was equally unstrained. The Church of Scotland, of which he held the doctrines (though in a sense of his own) and to which he bore a clansman's loyalty, profited often by his time and money; and though, from a morbid sense of his own unworthiness, he would never consent to be an office-bearer, his advice was often sought, and he served the Church on many committees. What he perhaps valued highest in his work were his contributions to the defense of Christianity; one of which, in particular, was praised by Hutchinson Stirling and reprinted at the request of Professor Crawford.

His sense of his own unworthiness I have called morbid; morbid, too, were his sense of the fleetingness of life and his concern for death. He had never accepted the conditions of man's life or his own character; and his inmost thoughts were ever tinged with the Celtic melancholy. Cases of conscience were sometimes grievous to him, and that delicate employment of a scientific witness cost him many qualms. But he found respite from these troublesome humors in his work, in his lifelong study of natural science, in the society of those he loved, and in his daily walks, which now would carry him far into the country with some congenial friend, and now keep him dangling about the town from one old book-shop to another, and scraping romantic acquaintance with every dog that passed. His talk, compounded of so much sterling sense and so much freakish humor, and clothed in language so apt, droll, and emphatic, was a perpetual delight to all who knew him before the clouds began to settle on his mind. His use of language was both just and picturesque; and when at the beginning of his illness he began to feel the ebbing of this power, it was strange and painful to hear him reject one word after another as inade-

quate, and at length desist from the search and leave his phrase unfinished rather than finish it without propriety. It was perhaps another Celtic trait that his affections and emotions, passionate as these were, and liable to passionate ups and downs, found the most eloquent expression both in words and gestures. Love, anger, and indignation shone through him and broke forth in imagery, like what we read of Southern races. For all these emotional extremes, and in spite of the melancholy ground of his character, he had upon the whole a happy life; nor was he less fortunate in his death, which at the last came to him unaware.

CHAPTER X

TALK AND TALKERS

Sir, we had a good talk.—JOHNSON.

As we must account for every idle word, so we must for every idle silence.—FRANKLIN.

I

THERE can be no fairer ambition than to excel in talk; to be affable, gay, ready, clear and welcome; to have a fact, a thought, or an illustration, pat to every subject; and not only to cheer the flight of time among our intimates, but bear our part in that great international congress, always sitting, where public wrongs are first declared, public errors first corrected, and the course of public opinion shaped, day by day, a little nearer to the right. No measure comes before Parliament but it has been long ago prepared by the grand jury of the talkers; no book is written that has not been largely composed by their assistance. Literature in many of its branches is no other than the shadow of good talk; but the imitation falls far short of the original in life, freedom and effect. There are always two to a talk, giving and taking, comparing experience and according conclusions. Talk is fluid, tentative, continually "in further search and progress;" while written words remain fixed, become idols even to the writer, found wooden dogmatisms, and preserve flies of obvious error in the amber of the truth. Last and chief, while literature, gagged with linsey-woolsey, can only deal with a fraction of the life of man, talk goes fancy free and may call a spade a spade. Talk has none of the freezing immunities of the pulpit. It can not, even if it would, become merely esthetic or merely classical like literature. A jest intervenes, the solemn

humbug is dissolved in laughter, and speech runs forth out of the contemporary groove into the open fields of nature, cheery and cheering, like schoolboys out of school. And it is in talk alone that we can learn our period and ourselves. In short, the first duty of a man is to speak; that is his chief business in this world; and talk, which is the harmonious speech of two or more, is by far the most accessible of pleasures. It costs nothing in money; it is all profit; it completes our education, founds and fosters our friendships, and can be enjoyed at any age and in almost any state of health.

The spice of life is battle; the friendliest relations are still a kind of contest; and if we would not forego all that is valuable in our lot, we must continually face some other person, eye to eye, and wrestle a fall whether in love or enmity. It is still by force of body, or power of character or intellect, that we attain to worthy pleasures. Men and women contend for each other in the lists of love, like rival mesmerists; the active and adroit decide their challenges in the sports of the body; and the sedentary sit down to chess or conversation. All sluggish and pacific pleasures are, to the same degree, solitary and selfish: and every durable bond between human beings is founded in or heightened by some element of competition. Now, the relation that has the least root in matter is undoubtedly that airy one of friendship; and hence, I suppose, it is that good talk most commonly arises among friends. Talk is, indeed, both the scene and instrument of friendship. It is in talk alone that the friends can measure strength, and enjoy that amicable counter-assertion of personality which is the gage of relations and the sport of life.

A good talk is not to be had for the asking. Humors must first be accorded in a kind of overture or prologue; hour, company and circumstance be suited; and then, at a fit juncture, the subject, the quarry of two heated minds, spring up like a deer out of the wood. Not that the talker has any of the hunter's pride, though he has all and more than all his ardor. The genuine artist follows the stream of conversation as an angler follows the windings of a brook, not dallying where he fails to "kill."

He trusts implicity to hazard; and he is rewarded by continual variety, continual pleasure, and those changing prospects of the truth that are the best of education. There is nothing in a subject, so called, that we should regard it as an idol, or follow it beyond the promptings of desire. Indeed, there are few subjects; and so far as they are truly talkable, more than the half of them may be reduced to three: that I am I, that you are you, and that there are other people dimly understood to be not quite the same as either. Wherever talk may range, it still runs half the time on these eternal lines. The theme being set, each plays on himself as on an instrument; asserts and justifies himself; ransacks his brain for instances and opinions, and brings them forth new-minted, to his own surprise and the admiration of his adversary. All natural talk is a festival of ostentation; and by the laws of the game each accepts and fans the vanity of the other. It is from that reason that we venture to lay ourselves so open, that we dare to be so warmly eloquent, and that we swell in each other's eyes to such a vast proportion. For talkers, once launched, begin to overflow the limits of their ordinary selves, tower up to the height of their secret pretensions, and give themselves out for the heroes, brave, pious, musical and wise, that in their most shining moments they aspire to be. So they weave for themselves with words and for a while inhabit a palace of delights, temple at once and theater, where they fill the round of the world's dignities, and feast with the gods, exulting in Kudos. And when the talk is over, each goes his way, still flushed with vanity and admiration, still trailing clouds of glory; each declines from the height of his ideal orgie, not in a moment, but by slow declension. I remember, in the *entr'acte* of an afternoon performance, coming forth into the sunshine, in a beautiful green, gardened corner of a romantic city; and as I sat and smoked, the music moving in my blood, I seemed to sit there and evaporate *The Flying Dutchman* (for it was that I had been hearing) with a wonderful sense of life, warmth, well-being and pride; and the noises of the city, voices, bells and marching feet, fell together in my ears like a

symphonious orchestra. In the same way, the excitement of a good talk lives for a long while after in the blood, the heart still hot within you, the brain still simmering, and the physical earth swimming around you with the colors of the sunset.

Natural talk, like plowing, should turn up a large surface of life, rather than dig mines into geological strata. Masses of experience, anecdote, incident, cross-lights, quotation, historical instances, the whole flotsam and jetsam of two minds forced in and in upon the matter in hand from every point of the compass, and from every degree of mental elevation and abasement—these are the material with which talk is fortified, the food on which the talkers thrive. Such argument as is proper to the exercise should still be brief and seizing. Talk should proceed by instances; by the apposite, not the expository. It should keep close along the lines of humanity, near the bosoms and businesses of men, at the level where history, fiction and experience intersect and illuminate each other. I am I, and You are You, with all my heart; but conceive how these lean propositions change and brighten when, instead of words, the actual you and I sit cheek by jowl, the spirit housed in the live body, and the very clothes uttering voices to corroborate the story in the face. Not less surprising is the change when we leave off to speak of generalities—the bad, the good, the miser, and all the characters of Theophrastus—and call up other men, by anecdote or instance, in their very trick and feature: or trading on a common knowledge, toss each other famous names, still glowing with the hues of life. Communication is no longer by words, but by the instancing of whole biographies, epics, systems of philosophy, and epochs of history, in bulk. That which is understood excels that which is spoken in quantity and quality alike; ideas thus figured and personified, change hands, as we may say, like coin; and the speakers imply without effort the most obscure and intricate thoughts. Strangers who have a large common ground of reading will, for this reason, come the sooner to the grapple of genuine converse. If they know Othello and Napoleon, Consuelo and Clarissa

Harlowe, Vautrin and Steenie Steenson, they can leave generalities and begin at once to speak by figures.

Conduct and art are the two subjects that arise most frequently and that embrace the widest range of facts. A few pleasures bear discussion for their own sake, but only those which are most social or most radically human; and even these can only be discussed among their devotees. A technicality is always welcome to the expert, whether in athletics, art or law; I have heard the best kind of talk on technicalities from such rare and happy persons as both know and love their business. No human being ever spoke of scenery for above two minutes at a time, which makes me suspect we hear too much of it in literature. The weather is regarded as the very nadir and scoff of conversational topics. And yet the weather, the dramatic element in scenery, is far more tractable in language, and far more human both in import and suggestion than the stable features of the landscape. Sailors and shepherds, and the people generally of coast and mountain, talk well of it; and it is often excitingly presented in literature. But the tendency of all living talk draws it back and back into the common focus of humanity. Talk is a creature of the street and market-place, feeding on gossip; and its last resort is still in a discussion on morals. That is the heroic form of gossip; heroic in virtue of its high pretensions; but still gossip, because it turns on personalities. You can keep no men long, nor Scotchmen at all, off moral or theological discussion. These are to all the world what law is to lawyers; they are everybody's technicalities; the medium through which all consider life, and the dialect in which they express their judgments. I knew three young men who walked together daily for some two months in a solemn and beautiful forest in cloudless summer weather; daily they talked with unabated zest, and yet scarce wandered that whole time beyond two subjects—theology and love. And perhaps neither a court of love nor an assembly of divines could have granted their premises or welcomed their conculsions.

Conclusions, indeed, are not often reached by talk any more than by private thinking. That is not the profit.

The profit is in the exercise, and above all in the experience; for when we reason at large on any subject, we review our state and history in life. From time to time, however, and specially, I think, in talking art, talk becomes effective, conquering like war, widening the boundaries of knowledge like an exploration. A point arises; the question takes a problematical, a baffling, yet a likely air; the talkers begin to feel lively presentiments of some conclusion near at hand; toward this they strive with emulous ardor, each by his own path, and struggling for first utterance; and then one leaps upon the summit of that matter with a shout, and almost at the same moment the other is beside him; and behold they are agreed. Like enough the progress is illusory, a mere cat's cradle having been wound and unwound out of words. But the sense of joint discovery is none the less giddy and inspiriting. And in the life of the talker such triumphs, though imaginary, are neither few nor far apart; they are attained with speed and pleasure, in the hour of mirth; and by the nature of the process, they are always worthily shared.

There is a certain attitude, combative at once and deferential, eager to fight yet most averse to quarrel, which marks out at once the talkable man. It is not eloquence, not fairness, not obstinacy, but a certain proportion of all of these that I love to encounter in my amicable adversaries. They must not be pontiffs holding doctrine, but huntsmen questing after elements of truth. Neither must they be boys to be instructed, but fellow-teachers with whom I may wrangle and agree on equal terms. We must reach some solution, some shadow of consent; for without that, eager talk becomes a torture. But we do not wish to reach it cheaply, or quickly, or without the tussle and effort wherein pleasure lies.

The very best talker, with me, is one whom I shall call Spring-Heel'd Jack. I say so, because I never knew any one who mingled so largely the possible ingredients of converse. In the Spanish proverb, the fourth man necessary to compound a salad, is a madman to mix it: Jack is that madman. I know not which is more remarkable; the

insane lucidity of his conclusions, the humorous eloquence of his language, or his power of method, bringing the whole of life into the focus of the subject treated, mixing the conversational salad like a drunken god. He doubles like the serpent, changes and flashes like the shaken kaleidoscope, transmigrates bodily into the views of others, and so, in the twinkling of an eye and with a heady rapture, turns questions inside out and flings them empty before you on the ground, like a triumphant conjurer. It is my common practise when a piece of conduct puzzles me, to attack it in the presence of Jack with such grossness, such partiality and such wearing iteration, as at length shall spur him up in its defense. In a moment he transmigrates, dons the required character, and with moonstruck philosophy justifies the act in question. I can fancy nothing to compare with the *vim* of these impersonations, the strange scale of language, flying from Shakespeare to Kant, and from Kant to Major Dyngwell—

> "As fast as a musician scatters sounds
> Out of an instrument—"

the sudden, sweeping generalizations, the absurd irrelevant particularities the wit, wisdom, folly, humor, eloquence, and pathos, each startling in its kind, and yet all luminous in the admired disorder of their combination. A talker of a different caliber, though belonging to the same school, is Burly. Burly is a man of a great presence; he commands a larger atmosphere, gives the impression of a grosser mass of character than most men. It has been said of him that his presence could be felt in a room you entered blindfold; and the same, I think, has been said of other powerful constitutions condemned to much physical inaction. There is something boisterous and piratic in Burly's manner of talk which suits well enough with this impression. He will roar you down, he will bury his face in his hands, he will undergo passions of revolt and agony; and meanwhile his attitude of mind is really both conciliatory and receptive; and after Pistol has been out-Pistol'd, and the welkin rung for hours,

you begin to perceive a certain subsidence in these spring torrents, points of agreement issue, and you end arm-in-arm, and in a glow of mutual admiration. The outcry only serves to make your final union the more unexpected and precious. Throughout there has been perfect sincerity, perfect intelligence, a desire to hear although not always to listen, and an unaffected eagerness to meet concessions. You have, with Burly, none of the dangers that attend debate with Spring-Heel'd Jack; who may at any moment turn his powers of transmigration on yourself, create for you a view you never held, and then furiously fall on you for holding it. These, at least, are my two favorites, and both are loud, copious intolerant talkers. This argues that I myself am in the same category; for if we love talking at all, we love a bright, fierce adversary, who will hold his ground, foot by foot, in much our own manner, sell his attention dearly, and give us our full measure of the dust and exertion of battle. Both these men can be beat from a position, but it takes six hours to do it; a high and hard adventure, worth attempting. With both you can pass days in an enchanted country of the mind, with people, scenery and manners of its own; live a life apart, more arduous, active and glowing than any real existence, and come forth again when the talk is over, as out of a theater or a dream, to find the east wind still blowing and the chimney-pots of the old battered city still around you. Jack has the far finer mind, Burly the far more honest; Jack gives us the animated poetry, Burly the romantic prose, of similar themes; the one glances high like a meteor and makes a light in darkness; the other, with many changing hues of fire, burns at the sea-level, like a conflagration; but both have the same humor and artistic interests, the same unquenched ardor in pursuit, the same gusts of talk and thunderclaps of contradiction.

Cockshot[1] is a different article, but vastly entertaining, and has been meat and drink to me for many a long evening. His manner is dry, brisk, and pertinacious, and the choice of words not much. The point about him is

[1] The late Fleeming Jenkin.

his extraordinary readiness and spirit. You can propound nothing but he has either a theory about it ready-made, or will have one instantly on the stocks, and proceed to lay its timbers and launch it in your presence. "Let me see," he will say. "Give me a moment. I *should* have some theory for that." A blither spectacle than the vigor with which he sets about the task, it were hard to fancy. He is possessed by a demoniac energy, welding the elements for his life, and bending ideas, as an athlete bends a horseshoe, with a visible and lively effort. He has, in theorizing, a compass, an art; what I would call the synthetic gusto; something of a Herbert Spencer, who should see the fun of the thing. You are not bound, and no more is he, to place your faith in these brand-new opinions. But some of them are right enough, durable even for life; and the poorest serve for a cock-shy—as when idle people, after picnics, float a bottle on a pond and have an hour's diversion ere it sinks. Whichever they are, serious opinions or humors of the moment, he still defends his ventures with indefatigable wit and spirit, hitting savagely himself, but taking punishment like a man. He knows and never forgets that people talk, first of all, for the sake of talking; conducts himself in the ring, to use the old slang, like a thorough "glutton," and honestly enjoys a telling facer from his adversary. Cockshot is bottled effervescence, the sworn foe of sleep. Three-in-the-morning Cockshot, says a victim. His talk is like the driest of all imaginable dry champagnes. Sleight of hand and inimitable quickness are the qualities by which he lives. Athelred, on the other hand, presents you with the spectacle of a sincere and somewhat slow nature thinking aloud. He is the most unready man I ever knew to shine in conversation. You may see him sometimes wrestle with a refractory jest for a minute or two together, and perhaps fail to throw it in the end. And there is something singularly engaging, often instructive, in the simplicity with which he thus exposes the process as well as the result, the works as well as the dial of the clock. Withal he has his hours of inspiration. Apt words come to him as if by accident, and, coming from deeper down, they

smack the more personally, they have the more of fine old crusted humanity, rich in sediment and humor. There are sayings of his in which he has stamped himself into the very grain of the language; you would think he must have worn the words next his skin and slept with them. Yet it is not as a sayer of particular good things that Athelred is most to be regarded, rather as the stalwart woodman of thought. I have pulled on a light cord often enough, while he has been wielding the broad-ax; and between us, on this unequal division, many a specious fallacy has fallen. I have known him to battle the same question night after night for years, keeping it in the reign of talk, constantly applying it and reapplying it to life with humorous or grave intention, and all the while, never hurrying, nor flagging, nor taking an unfair advantage of the facts. Jack at a given moment, when arising, as it were, from the tripod, can be more radiantly just to those from whom he differs; but then the tenor of his thoughts is even calumnious; while Athelred, slower to forge excuses, is yet slower to condemn, and sits over the welter of the world, vacillating but still judicial, and still faithfully contending with his doubts.

Both the last talkers deal much in points of conduct and religion studied in the "dry light" of prose. Indirectly and as if against his will the same elements from time to time appear in the troubled and poetic talk of Opalstein. His various and exotic knowledge, complete although unready sympathies, and fine, full, discriminative flow of language, fit him out to be the best of talkers; so perhaps he is with some, not *quite* with me—*proxime accessit*, I should say. He sings the praises of the earth and the arts, flowers and jewels, wine and music, in a moonlight, serenading manner, as to the light guitar; even wisdom comes from his tongue like singing; no one is, indeed, more tuneful in the upper notes. But even while he sings the song of the Sirens, he still harkens to the barking of the Sphinx. Jarring Byronic notes interrupt the flow of his Horatian humors. His mirth has something of the tragedy of the world for its perpetual background; and he feasts like Don Giovanni to a double orchestra, one

lightly sounding for the dance, one pealing Beethoven in the distance. He is not truly reconciled either with life or with himself; and this instant war in his members sometimes divides the man's attention. He does not always, perhaps not often, frankly surrender himself in conversation. He brings into the talk other thoughts than those which he expresses; you are conscious that he keeps an eye on something else, that he does not shake off the world, nor quite forget himself. Hence arise occasional disappointments; even an occasional unfairness for his companions, who find themselves one day giving too much, and the next, when they are wary out of season, giving perhaps too little. Purcel is in another class from any I have mentioned. He is no debater, but appears in conversation, as occasion rises, in two distinct characters, one of which I admire and fear, and the other love. In the first, he is radiantly civil and rather silent, sits on a high, courtly hilltop, and from that vantage-ground drops you his remarks like favors. He seems not to share in our sublunary contentions; he wears no sign of interest; when on a sudden there falls in a crystal of wit, so polished that the dull do not perceive it, but so right that the sensitive are silenced. True talk should have more body and blood, should be louder, vainer and more declaratory of the man; the true talker should not hold so steady an advantage over whom he speaks with; and that is one reason out of a score why I prefer my Purcel in his second character, when he unbends into a strain of graceful gossip, singing like the fireside kettle. In these moods he has an elegant homeliness that rings of the true Queen Anne. I know another person who attains, in his moments, to the insolence of a Restoration comedy, speaking, I declare, as Congreve wrote; but that is a sport of nature, and scarce falls under the rubric, for there is none, alas! to give him answer.

One last remark occurs: It is the mark of genuine conversation that the sayings can scarce be quoted with their full effect beyond the circle of common friends. To have their proper weight they should appear in a biography, and with the portrait of the speaker. Good talk is

dramatic; it is like an impromptu piece of acting where each should represent himself to the greatest advantage; and that is the best kind of talk where each speaker is most fully and candidly himself, and where, if you were to shift the speeches round from one to another, there would be the greatest loss in significance and perspicuity. It is for this reason that talk depends so wholly on our company. We should like to introduce Falstaff and Mercutio, or Falstaff and Sir Toby; but Falstaff in talk with Cordelia seems even painful. Most of us, by the Protean quality of man, can talk to some degree with all; but the true talk, that strikes out all the slumbering best of us, comes only with the peculiar brethren of our spirits, is founded as deep as love in the constitution of our being, and is a thing to relish with all our energy, while yet we have it, and to be grateful for forever.

CHAPTER XI

TALK AND TALKERS[1]

II

IN THE last paper there was perhaps too much about mere debate; and there was nothing said at all about that kind of talk which is merely luminous and restful, a higher power of silence, the quiet of the evening shared by ruminating friends. There is something, aside from personal preference, to be alleged in support of this omission. Those who are no chimney-cornerers, who rejoice in the social thunderstorm, have a ground in reason for their choice. They get little rest indeed; but restfulness is a quality for cattle; the virtues are all active, life is alert, and it is in repose that men prepare themselves for evil. On the other hand, they are bruised into a knowledge of themselves and others; they have in a high degree the fencer's pleasure in dexterity displayed and proved; what they get they get upon life's terms, paying for it as they go; and once the talk is launched, they are assured of honest dealing from an adversary eager like themselves. The aboriginal man within us, the cave-dweller, still lusty as when he fought tooth and nail for roots and berries, scents this kind of equal battle from afar; it is like his old primeval days upon the crags, a return to the sincerity of savage life from the comfortable fictions of the civilized. And if it be delightful to the Old Man, it is none the less profitable to his younger brother, the conscientious gentleman. I feel never quite sure of your urbane and smiling coteries; I fear they indulge a man's vanities in silence, suffer him to encroach, encourage him on to be an ass, and send him forth again, not merely con-

[1] This article was called forth by an excellent article in *The Spectator.*

temned for the moment, but radically more contemptible than when he entered. But if I have a flushed, blustering fellow for my opposite, bent on carrying a point, my vanity is sure to have its ears rubbed, once at least, in the course of the debate. He will not spare me when we differ; he will not fear to demonstrate my folly to my face.

For many natures there is not much charm in the still, chambered society, the circle of bland countenances, the digestive silence, the admired remark, the flutter of affectionate approval. They demand more atmosphere and exercise; "a gale upon their spirits," as our pious ancestors would phrase it; to have their wits well breathed in an uproarious Valhalla. And I suspect that the choice, given their character and faults, is one to be defended. The purely wise are silenced by facts; they talk in a clear atmosphere, problems lying around them like a view in nature; if they can be shown to be somewhat in the wrong, they digest the reproof like a thrashing, and make better intellectual blood. They stand corrected by a whisper; a word or a glance reminds them of the great eternal law. But it is not so with all. Others in conversation seek rather contact with their fellow men than increase of knowledge or clarity of thought. The drama, not the philosophy, of life is the sphere of their intellectual activity. Even when they pursue truth, they desire as much as possible of what we may call human scenery along the road they follow. They dwell in the heart of life; the blood sounding in their ears, their eyes laying hold of what delights them with a brutal avidity that makes them blind to all besides, their interest riveted on people, living, loving, talking, tangible people. To a man of this description, the sphere of argument seems very pale and ghostly. By a strong expression, a perturbed countenance, floods of tears, and insult which his conscience obliges him to swallow, he is brought round to knowledge which no syllogism would have conveyed to him. His own experience is so vivid, he is so superlatively conscious of himself, that if, day after day, he is allowed to hector and hear nothing but approving echoes, he will lose his hold on the soberness

of things and take himself in earnest for a god. Talk might be to such an one the very way of moral ruin; the school where he might learn to be at once intolerable and ridiculous.

This character is perhaps commoner than philosophers suppose. And for persons of that stamp to learn much by conversation, they must speak with their superiors, not in intellect, for that is a superiority that must be proved, but in station. If they can not find a friend to bully them for their good, they must find either an old man, a woman, or some one so far below them in the artificial order of society, that courtesy may be particularly exercised.

The best teachers are the aged. To the old our mouths are always partly closed; we must swallow our obvious retorts and listen. They sit above our heads, on life's raised dais, and appeal at once to our respect and pity. A flavor of the old school, a touch of something different in their manner—which is freer and rounder, if they come of what is called a good family, and often more timid and precise if they are of the middle class—serves, in these days, to accentuate the difference of age and add a distinction to gray hairs. But their superiority is founded more deeply than by outward marks or gestures. They are before us in the march of man; they have more or less solved the irking problem; they have battled through the equinox of life; in good and evil they have held their course; and now, without open shame, they near the crown and harbor. It may be we have been struck with one of fortune's darts; we can scarce be civil, so cruelly is our spirit tossed. Yet long before we were so much as thought upon, the like calamity befell the old man or woman that now, with pleasant humor, rallies us upon our inattention, sitting composed in the holy evening of man's life, in the clear shining after rain. We grow ashamed of our distresses, new and hot and coarse, like villainous roadside brandy; we see life in aerial perspective, under the heavens of faith; and out of the worst, in the mere presence of contented elders, look forward and take patience. Fear shrinks before them "like a thing reproved," not the flitting and ineffectual fear of death, but the instant, dwell-

ing terror of the responsibilities and revenges of life. Their speech, indeed, is timid; they report lions in the path; they counsel a meticulous footing; but their serene, marred faces are more eloquent and tell another story. Where they have gone, we will go also, not very greatly fearing; what they have endured unbroken, we also, God helping us, will make a shift to bear.

Not only is the presence of the aged in itself remedial, but their minds are stored with antidotes, wisdom's simples, plain considerations overlooked by youth. They have matter to communicate, be they never so stupid. Their talk is not merely literature, it is great literature; classic in virtue of the speaker's detachment, studded, like a book of travel, with things we should not otherwise have learned. In virtue, I have said, of the speaker's detachment—and this is why, of two old men, the one who is not your father speaks to you with the more sensible authority; for in the paternal relation the oldest have lively interests and remain still young. Thus I have known two young men great friends; each swore by the other's father; the father of each swore by the other lad; and yet each pair of parent and child were perpetually by the ears. This is typical: it reads like the germ of some kindly comedy.

The old appear in conversation in two characters: the critically silent and the garrulous anecdotic. The last is perhaps what we look for; it is perhaps the more instructive. An old gentleman, well on in years, sits handsomely and naturally in the bow-window of his age, scanning experience with reverted eye; and chirping and smiling, communicates the accidents and reads the lesson of his long career. Opinions are strengthened, indeed, but they are also weeded out in the course of years. What remains steadily present to the eye of the retired veteran in his hermitage, what still ministers to his content, what still quickens his old honest heart—these are "the real long-lived things" that Whitman tells us to prefer. Where youth agrees with age, not where they differ, wisdom lies; and it is when the young disciple finds his heart to beat in tune with his gray-bearded teacher's that a lesson may be

learned. I have known one old gentleman, whom I may name, for he is now gathered to his stock—Robert Hunter, Sheriff of Dumbarton, and author of an excellent law-book still reedited and republished. Whether he was originally big or little is more than I can guess. When I knew him he was all fallen away and fallen in; crooked and shrunken; buckled into a stiff waistcoat for support; troubled by ailments, which kept him hobbling in and out of the room; one foot gouty; a wig for decency, not for deception, on his head; close shaved, except under his chin —and for that he never failed to apologize, for it went sore against the traditions of his life. You can imagine how he would fare in a novel by Miss Mather; yet this rag of a Chelsea veteran lived to his last year in the plenitude of all that is best in man, brimming with human kindness, and stanch as a Roman soldier under his manifold infirmities. You could not say that he had lost his memory, for he would repeat Shakespeare and Webster and Jeremy Taylor and Burke by the page together; but the parchment was filled up, there was no room for fresh inscriptions, and he was capable of repeating the same anecdote on many successive visits. His voice survived in its full power, and he took a pride in using it. On his last voyage as Commissioner of Lighthouses, he hailed a ship at sea and made himself clearly audible without a speaking trumpet, ruffling the while with a proper vanity in his achievement. He had a habit of eking out his words with interrogative hems, which was puzzling and a little wearisome, suited ill with his appearance, and seemed a survival from some former stage of bodily portliness. Of yore, when he was a great pedestrian and no enemy to good claret, he may have pointed with these minute guns his allocutions to the bench. His humor was perfectly equable, set beyond the reach of fate; gout, rheumatism, stone and gravel might have combined their forces against that frail tabernacle, but when I came round on Sunday evening, he would lay aside Jeremy Taylor's *Life of Christ* and greet me with the same open brow, the same kind formality of manner. His opinions and sympathies dated the man almost to a decade. He had begun life, under

his mother's influence, as an admirer of Junius, but on maturer knowledge had transferred his admiration to Burke. He cautioned me, with entire gravity, to be punctilious in writing English; never to forget that I was a Scotchman, that English was a foreign tongue, and that if I attempted the colloquial, I should certainly be shamed: the remark was apposite, I suppose, in the days of David Hume. Scott was too new for him; he had known the author—known him, too, for a Tory; and to the genuine classic a contemporary is always something of a trouble. He had the old, serious love of the play; had even, as he was proud to tell, played a certain part in the history of Shakespearian revivals, for he had successfully pressed on Murray, of the old Edinburgh Theater, the idea of producing Shakespeare's fairy pieces with great scenic display. A moderate in religion, he was much struck in the last years of his life by a conversation with two young lads, revivalists. "H'm," he would say—"new to me. I have had—h'm—no such experience." It struck him, not with pain, rather with a solemn philosophic interest, that he, a Christian as he hoped, and a Christian of so old a standing, should hear these young fellows talking of his own subject, his own weapons that he had fought the battle of life with—"and—h'm—not understand." In this wise and graceful attitude he did justice to himself and others, reposed unshaken in his old beliefs, and recognized their limits without anger or alarm. His last recorded remark, on the last night of his life, was after he had been arguing against Calvinism with his minister and was interrupted by an intolerable pang. "After all," he said, "of all the 'isms, I know none so bad as rheumatism." My own last sight of him was some time before, when we dined together at an inn; he had been on circuit, for he stuck to his duties like a chief part of his existence; and I remember it as the only occasion on which he ever soiled his lips with slang—a thing he loathed. We were both Roberts; and as we took our places at table, he addressed me with a twinkle: "We are just what you would call two bob." He offered me port, I remember, as the proper milk of youth; spoke of "twenty-shilling notes"; and

throughout the meal was full of old-world pleasantry and quaintness, like an ancient boy on a holiday. But what I recall chiefly was his confession that he had never read *Othello* to an end. Shakespeare was his continual study. He loved nothing better than to display his knowledge and memory by adducing parallel passages from Shakespeare, passages where the same word was employed, or the same idea differently treated. But *Othello* had beaten him. "That noble gentleman and that noble lady—h'm—too painful for me." The same night the hoardings were covered with posters, "Burlesque of *Othello*," and the contrast blazed up in my mind like a bonfire. An unforgettable look it gave me into that kind man's soul. His acquaintance was indeed a liberal and pious education. All the humanities were taught in that bare dining-room beside his gouty footstool. He was a piece of good advice; he was himself the instance that pointed and adorned his various talk. Nor could a young man have found elsewhere a place so set apart from envy, fear, discontent, or any of the passions that debase; a life so honest and composed; a soul like an ancient violin, so subdued to harmony, responding to a touch in music—as in that dining-room with Mr. Hunter chatting at the eleventh hour, under the shadow of eternity, fearless and gentle.

The second class of old people are not anecdotic; they are rather hearers than talkers, listening to the young with an amused and critical attention. To have this sort of intercourse to perfection, I think we must go to old ladies. Women are better hearers than men, to begin with; they learn, I fear in anguish, to bear with the tedious and infantile vanity of the other sex; and we will take more from a woman than even from the oldest man in the way of biting comment. Biting comment is the chief part, whether for profit or amusement, in this business. The old lady that I have in my eye is a very caustic speaker, her tongue, after years of practise, in absolute command, whether for silence or attack. If she chance to dislike you, you will be tempted to curse the malignity of age. But if you chance to please even slightly, you will be listened to with a particular laughing grace of sympa-

thy, and from time to time chastised, as if in play, with a parasol as heavy as a pole-ax. It requires a singular art, as well as the vantage-ground of age, to deal these stunning corrections among the coxcombs of the young. The pill is disguised in sugar of wit; it is administered as a compliment—if you had not pleased, you would not have been censured; it is a personal affair—a hyphen, a *trait d'union,* between you and your censor; age's philandering, for her pleasure and your good. Incontestably the young man feels very much of a fool; but he must be a perfect Malvolio, sick with self-love, if he can not take an open buffet and still smile. The correction of silence is what kills; when you know you have transgressed, and your friend says nothing and avoids your eye. If a man were made of gutta-percha, his heart would quail at such a moment. But when the word is out, the worst is over; and a fellow with any good humor at all may pass through a perfect hail of witty criticism, every bare place on his soul hit to the quick with a shrewd missile, and reappear, as if after a dive, tingling with a fine moral reaction, and ready, with a shrinking readiness, one-third loath, for a repetition of the discipline.

There are few women, not well sunned and ripened, and perhaps toughened, who can thus stand apart from a man and say the true thing with a kind of genial cruelty. Still there are some—and I doubt if there be any man who can return the compliment. The class of man represented by Vernon Whitford in *The Egoist* says, indeed, the true thing, but he says it stockishly. Vernon is a noble fellow, and makes, by the way, a noble and instructive contrast to Daniel Deronda; his conduct is the conduct of a man of honor; but we agree with him, against our consciences, when he remorsefully considers "its astonishing dryness." He is the best of men, but the best of women manage to combine all that and something more. Their very faults assist them; they are helped even by the falseness of their position in life. They can retire into the fortified camp of the proprieties. They can touch a subject and suppress it. The most adroit employ a somewhat elaborate reserve as a means to be frank, much as they wear gloves when

they shake hands. But a man has the full responsibility of his freedom, can not evade a question, can scarce be silent without rudeness, must answer for his words upon the moment and is not seldom left face to face with a damning choice, between the more or less dishonorable wriggling of a Deronda and the downright woodenness of Vernon Whitford.

But the superiority of women is perpetually menaced; they do not sit throned on infirmities like the old; they are suitors as well as sovereigns; their vanity is engaged, their affections are too apt to follow; and hence much of the talk between the sexes degenerates into something unworthy of the name. The desire to please, to shine with a certain softness of luster and to draw a fascinating picture of oneself, banishes from conversation all that is sterling and most of what is humorous. As soon as a strong current of mutual admiration begins to flow, the human interest triumphs entirely over the intellectual, and the commerce of words, consciously or not, becomes secondary to the commercing of eyes. But even where this ridiculous danger is avoided, and a man and woman converse equally and honestly, something in their nature or their education falsifies the strain. An instinct prompts them to agree; and where that is impossible, to agree to differ. Should they neglect the warning, at the first suspicion of an argument, they find themselves in different hemispheres. About any point of business or conduct, any actual affair demanding settlement, a woman will speak and listen, hear and answer arguments, not only with natural wisdom, but with candor and logical honesty. But if the subject of debate be something in the air, an abstraction, an excuse for talk, a logical Aunt Sally, then may the male debater instantly abandon hope; he may employ reason, adduce facts, be supple, be smiling, be angry, all shall avail him nothing; what the woman said first, that (unless she has forgotten it) she will repeat at the end. Hence, at the very junctures when a talk between men grows brighter and quicker and begins to promise to bear fruit, talk between the sexes is menaced with dissolution. The point of difference, the point of in-

terest, is evaded by the brilliant woman, under a shower of irrelevant conversational rockets; it is bridged by the discreet woman with a rustle of silk, as she passes smoothly forward to the nearest point of safety. And this sort of prestidigitation, juggling the dangerous topic out of sight until it can be reintroduced with safety in an altered shape, is a piece of tactics among the true drawing-room queens.

The drawing-room is, indeed, an artificial place; it is so by our choice and for our sins. The subjection of women; the ideal imposed upon them from the cradle, and worn, like a hair-shirt, with so much constancy; their motherly, superior tenderness to man's vanity and self-importance; their managing arts—the arts of a civilized slave among good-natured barbarians—are all painful ingredients and all help to falsify relations. It is not till we get clear of that amusing artificial scene that genuine relations are founded, or ideas honestly compared. In the garden, on the road or the hillside, or *tête-à-tête* and apart from interruptions, occasions arise when we may learn much from any single woman; and nowhere more often than in married life. Marriage is one long conversation, checkered by disputes. The disputes are valueless; they but ingrain the difference; the heroic heart of woman prompting her at once to nail her colors to the mast. But in the intervals, almost unconsciously and with no desire to shine, the whole material of life is turned over and over, ideas are struck out and shared, the two persons more and more adapt their notions one to suit the other, and in process of time, without sound of trumpet, they conduct each other into new worlds of thought.

CHAPTER XII

THE CHARACTER OF DOGS

THE civilization, the manners, and the morals of dogkind are to a great extent subordinated to those of his ancestral master, man. This animal, in many ways so superior, has accepted a position of inferiority, shares the domestic life, and humors the caprices of the tyrant. But the potentate, like the British in India, pays small regard to the character of his willing client, judges him with listless glances, and condemns him in a byword. Listless have been the looks of his admirers, who have exhausted idle terms of praise, and buried the poor soul below exaggerations. And yet more idle and, if possible, more unintelligent has been the attitude of his express detractors; those who are very fond of dogs "but in their proper place": who say "poo' fellow, poo' fellow," and are themselves far poorer; who whet the knife of the vivisectionist or heat his oven; who are not ashamed to admire "the creature's instinct"; and flying far beyond folly, have dared to resuscitate the theory of animal machines. The "dog's instinct" and the "automaton-dog," in this age of psychology and science, sound like strange anachronisms. An automaton he certainly is; a machine working independently of his control, the heart like the mill-wheel, keeping all in motion, and the consciousness, like a person shut in the mill garret, enjoying the view out of the window and shaken by the thunder of the stones; an automaton in one corner of which a living spirit is confined: an automaton like man. Instinct again he certainly possesses. Inherited aptitudes are his, inherited frailties. Some things he at once views and understands, as though he were awakened from a sleep, as though he came "trailing clouds of glory." But with him, as with man, the field of instinct is limited; its utterances are ob-

scure and occasional; and about the far larger part of life both the dog and his master must conduct their steps by deduction and observation.

The leading distinction between dog and man, after and perhaps before the different duration of their lives, is that the one can speak and the other can not. The absence of the power of speech confines the dog in the development of his intellect. It hinders him from many speculations, for words are the beginning of metaphysic. At the same blow it saves him from many superstitions, and his silence has won for him a higher name for virtue than his conduct justifies.

The faults of the dog are many. He is vainer than man, singularly greedy of notice, singularly intolerant of ridicule, suspicious like the deaf, jealous to the degree of frenzy, and radically devoid of truth. The day of an intelligent small dog is passed in the manufacture and the laborious communication of falsehood; he lies with his tail, he lies with his eyes, he lies with his protesting paw; and when he rattles his dish or scratches at the door his purpose is other than appears. But he has some apology to offer for the vice. Many of the signs which form his dialect have come to bear an arbitrary meaning, clearly understood both by his master and himself; yet when a new want arises he must either invent a new vehicle of meaning or wrest an old one to a different purpose; and this necessity frequently recurring must tend to lessen his idea of the sanctity of symbols. Meanwhile the dog is clear in his own conscience, and draws, with a human nicety, the distinction between formal and essential truth. Of his punning perversions, his legitimate dexterity with symbols, he is even vain; but when he has told and been detected in a lie, there is not a hair upon his body but confesses guilt. To a dog of gentlemanly feeling theft and falsehood are disgraceful vices. The canine, like the human, gentleman demands in his misdemeanors Montaigne's "*je ne sais quoi généreux.*" He is never more than half ashamed of having barked or bitten; and for those faults into which he has been led by the desire to shine before a lady of his race, he retains, even under

physical correction, a share of pride. But to be caught lying, if he understands it, instantly uncurls his fleece.

Just as among dull observers he preserves a name for truth, the dog has been credited with modesty. It is amazing how the use of language blunts the faculties of man—that because vainglory finds no vent in words, creatures supplied with eyes have been unable to detect a fault so gross and obvious. If a small spoiled dog were suddenly to be endowed with speech, he would prate interminably, and still about himself; when we had friends, we should be forced to lock him in a garret; and what with his whining jealousies and his foible for falsehood, in a year's time he would have gone far to weary out our love. I was about to compare him to Sir Willoughby Patterne, but the Patternes have a manlier sense of their own merits; and the parallel, besides, is ready. Hans Christian Andersen, as we behold him in his startling memoirs, thrilling from top to toe with an excruciating vanity, and scouting even along the street for shadows of offense—here was the talking dog.

It is just this rage for consideration that has betrayed the dog into his satellite position as the friend of man. The cat, an animal of franker appetites, preserves his independence. But the dog, with one eye ever on the audience, has been wheedled into slavery, and praised and patted into the renunciation of his nature. Once he ceased hunting and became man's plate-licker, the Rubicon was crossed. Thenceforth he was a gentleman of leisure; and except the few whom we keep working, the whole race grew more and more self-conscious, mannered and affected. The number of things that a small dog does naturally is strangely small. Enjoying better spirits and not crushed under material cares, he is far more theatrical than average man. His whole life, if he be a dog of any pretension to gallantry, is spent in a vain show, and in the hot pursuit of admiration. Take out your puppy for a walk, and you will find the little ball of fur clumsy, stupid, bewildered, but natural. Let but a few months pass, and when you repeat the process you will find nature buried in convention. He will do nothing plainly; but the sim-

plest processes of our material life will all be bent into the forms of an elaborate and mysterious etiquette. Instinct, says the fool, has awakened. But it is not so. Some dogs—some, at the very least—if they be kept separate from others, remain quite natural; and these, when at length they meet with a companion of experience, and have the game explained to them, distinguish themselves by the severity of their devotion to its rules. I wish I were allowed to tell a story which would radiantly illuminate the point; but men, like dogs, have an elaborate and mysterious etiquette. It is their bond of sympathy that both are the children of convention.

The person, man or dog, who has a conscience is eternally condemned to some degree of humbug; the sense of the law in their members fatally precipitates either toward a frozen and affected bearing. And the converse is true; and in the elaborate and conscious manners of the dog, moral opinions and the love of the ideal stand confessed. To follow for ten minutes in the street some swaggering, canine cavalier, is to receive a lesson in dramatic art and the cultured conduct of the body; in every act and gesture you see him true to a refined conception; and the dullest cur, beholding him, pricks up his ear and proceeds to imitate and parody that charming ease. For to be a high-mannered and high-minded gentleman, careless, affable, and gay, is the inborn pretension of the dog. The large dog, so much lazier, so much more weighed upon with matter, so majestic in repose, so beautiful in effort, is born with the dramatic means to wholly represent the part. And it is more pathetic and perhaps more instructive to consider the small dog in his conscientious and imperfect efforts to outdo Sir Philip Sidney. For the ideal of the dog is feudal and religious; the ever-present polytheism, the whip-bearing Olympus of mankind, rules them on the one hand; on the other, their singular difference of size and strength among themselves effectually prevents the appearance of the democratic notion. Or we might more exactly compare their society to the curious spectacle presented by a school—ushers, monitors, and big and little boys—qualified by one circumstance, the introduction of

the other sex. In each, we should observe a somewhat similar tension of manner, and somewhat similar points of honor. In each the larger animal keeps a contemptuous good humor; in each the smaller annoys him with wasp-like impudence, certain of practical immunity; in each we shall find a double life producing double characters, and an excursive and noisy heroism combined with a fair amount of practical timidity. I have known dogs, and I have known school heroes that, set aside the fur, could hardly have been told apart; and if we desire to understand the chivalry of old, we must turn to the school playfields or the dungheap where the dogs are trooping.

Woman, with the dog, has been long enfranchised. Incessant massacre of female innocents has changed the proportions of the sexes and perverted their relations. Thus, when we regard the manners of the dog, we see a romantic and monogamous animal, once perhaps as delicate as the cat, at war with impossible conditions. Man has much to answer for; and the part he plays is yet more damnable and parlous than Corin's in the eyes of Touchstone. But his intervention has at least created an imperial situation for the rare surviving ladies. In that society they reign without a rival: conscious queens; and in the only instance of a canine wife-beater that has ever fallen under my notice, the criminal was somewhat excused by the circumstances of his story. He is a little, very alert, well-bred, intelligent Skye, as black as a hat, with a wet bramble for a nose and two cairngorms for eyes. To the human observer, he is decidedly well-looking; but to the ladies of his race he seems abhorrent. A thorough elaborate gentleman, of the plume and sword-knot order, he was born with a nice sense of gallantry to women. He took at their hands the most outrageous treatment; I have heard him bleating like a sheep, I have seen him streaming blood, and his ear tattered like a regimental banner; and yet he would scorn to make reprisals. Nay more, when a human lady upraised the contumelious whip against the very dame who had been so cruelly misusing him, my little great-heart gave but one hoarse cry and fell upon the tyrant tooth and nail. This is the tale

of a soul's tragedy. After three years of unavailing chivalry, he suddenly, in one hour, threw off the yoke of obligation; had he been Shakespeare he would then have written *Troilus and Cressida* to brand the offending sex; but being only a little dog, he began to bite them. The surprise of the ladies whom he attacked indicated the monstrosity of his offense; but he had fairly beaten off his better angel, fairly committed moral suicide; for almost in the same hour, throwing aside the last rags of decency, he proceeded to attack the aged also. The fact is worth remark, showing, as it does, that ethical laws are common both to dogs and men; and that with both a single deliberate violation of the conscience loosens all. "But while the lamp holds on to burn," says the paraphrase, "the greatest sinner may return." I have been cheered to see symptoms of effectual penitence in my sweet ruffian; and by the handling that he accepted uncomplainingly the other day from an indignant fair one, I begin to hope the period of *Sturm und Drang* is closed.

All these little gentlemen are subtle casuists. The duty to the female dog is plain; but where competing duties rise, down they will sit and study them out, like Jesuit confessors. I knew another little Skye, somewhat plain in manner and appearance, but a creature compact of amiability and solid wisdom. His family going abroad for a winter, he was received for that period by an uncle in the same city. The winter over, his own family home again, and his own house (of which he was very proud) reopened, he found himself in a dilemma between two conflicting duties of loyalty and gratitude. His old friends were not to be neglected, but it seemed hardly decent to desert the new. This was how he solved the problem. Every morning, as soon as the door was opened, off posted Coolin to his uncle's, visited the children in the nursery, saluted the whole family, and was back at home in time for breakfast and his bit of fish. Nor was this done without a sacrifice on his part, sharply felt; for he had to forego the particular honor and jewel of his day—his morning's walk with my father. And, perhaps from this cause, he gradually wearied of and relaxed the practise, and at

length returned entirely to his ancient habits. But the same decision served him in another and more distressing case of divided duty, which happened not long after. He was not at all a kitchen dog, but the cook had nursed him with unusual kindness during the distemper; and though he did not adore her as he adored my father—although (born snob) he was critically conscious of her position as "only a servant"—he still cherished for her a special gratitude. Well, the cook left, and retired some streets away to lodgings of her own; and there was Coolin in precisely the same situation with any young gentleman who has had the inestimable benefit of a faithful nurse. The canine conscience did not solve the problem with a pound of tea at Christmas. No longer content to pay a flying visit, it was the whole forenoon that he dedicated to his solitary friend. And so, day by day, he continued to comfort her solitude until (for some reason which I could never understand and can not approve) he was kept locked up to break him of the graceful habit. Here, it is not the similarity, it is the difference, that is worthy of remark; the clearly marked degrees of gratitude and the proportional duration of his visits. Anything further removed from instinct it were hard to fancy; and one is even stirred to a certain impatience with a character so destitute of spontaneity, so passionless in justice, and so priggishly obedient to the voice of reason.

There are not many dogs like this good Coolin, and not many people. But the type is one well marked, both in the human and the canine family. Gallantry was not his aim, but a solid and somewhat oppressive respectability. He was a sworn foe to the unusual and the conspicuous, a praiser of the golden mean, a kind of city uncle modified by Cheeryble. And as he was precise and conscientious in all the steps of his own blameless course, he looked for the same precision and an even greater gravity in the bearing of his deity, my father. It was no sinecure to be Coolin's idol: he was exacting like a rigid parent; and at every sign of levity in the man whom he respected, he announced loudly the death of virtue and the proximate fall of the pillars of the earth.

I have called him a snob; but all dogs are so, though in varying degrees. It is hard to follow their snobbery among themselves; for though I think we can perceive distinctions of rank, we can not grasp what is the criterion. Thus in Edinburgh, in a good part of the town, there were several distinct societies or clubs that met in the morning to—the phrase is technical—to "rake the backets" in a troop. A friend of mine, the master of three dogs, was one day surprised to observe that they had left one club and joined another; but whether it was a rise or a fall, and the result of an invitation or an expulsion, was more than he could guess. And this illustrates pointedly our ignorance of the real life of dogs, their social ambitions and their social hierarchies. At least, in their dealings with men they are not only conscious of sex, but of the difference of station. And that in the most snobbish manner; for the poor man's dog is not offended by the notice of the rich, and keeps all his ugly feeling for those poorer or more ragged than his master. And again, for every station they have an ideal of behavior, to which the master, under pain of derogation, will do wisely to conform. How often has not a cold glance of an eye informed me that my dog was disappointed; and how much more gladly would he not have taken a beating than to be thus wounded in the seat of piety!

I knew one disrespectable dog. He was far liker a cat; cared little or nothing for men, with whom he merely coexisted as we do with cattle, and was entirely devoted to the art of poaching. A house would not hold him, and to live in a town was what he refused. He led, I believe, a life of troubled but genuine pleasure, and perished beyond all question in a trap. But this was an exception, a marked reversion to the ancestral type; like the hairy human infant. The true dog of the nineteenth century, to judge by the remainder of my fairly large acquaintance, is in love with respectability. A street-dog was once adopted by a lady. While still an Arab, he had done as Arabs do, gamboling in the mud, charging into butchers' stalls, a cat-hunter, a sturdy beggar, a common rogue and vagabond; but with his rise into society he laid aside these

inconsistent pleasures. He stole no more, he hunted no more cats; and conscious of his collar, he ignored his old companions. Yet the canine upper class was never brought to recognize the upstart, and from that hour, except for human countenance, he was alone. Friendless, shorn of his sports and the habits of a lifetime, he still lived in a glory of happiness, content with his acquired respectability, and with no care but to support it solemnly. Are we to condemn or praise this self-made dog? We praise his human brother. And thus to conquer vicious habits is as rare with dogs as with men. With the more part, for all their scruple-mongering and moral thought, the vices that are born with them remain invincible throughout; and they live all their years, glorying in their virtues, but still the slaves of their defects. Thus the sage Colin was a thief to the last; among a thousand peccadilloes, a whole goose and a whole cold leg of mutton lay upon his conscience; but Woggs,[1] whose soul's shipwreck in the matter of gallantry I have recounted above, has only twice been known to steal, and has often nobly conquered the temptation. The eighth is his favorite commandment. There is something painfully human in these unequal virtues and mortal frailties of the best. Still more painful is the bearing of those "stammering professors" in the house of sickness and under the terror of death. It is beyond a doubt to me that, somehow or other, the dog connects together, or confounds, the uneasiness of sickness and the consciousness of guilt. To the pains of the body he often adds the tortures of the conscience; and at these times his haggard protestations form, in regard to the human deathbed, a dreadful parody or parallel.

I once supposed that I had found an inverse relation between the double etiquette which dogs obey; and that those who were most addicted to the showy street life among other dogs were less careful in the practise of home virtues for the tyrant man. But the female dog, that mass of carneying affectations, shines equally in either

[1] Walter, Watty, Woggy, Woggs, Wogg, and lastly Bogue; under which last name he fell in battle some twelve months ago. Glory was his aim and he attained it; for his icon, by the hand of Caldecott, now lies among the treasures of the nation.

sphere; rules her rough posse of attendant swains with unwearying tact and gusto; and with her master and mistress pushes the arts of insinuation to their crowning point. The attention of man and the regard of other dogs flatter (it would thus appear) the same sensibility; but perhaps, if we could read the canine heart, they would be found to flatter it in very different degrees. Dogs live with man as courtiers round a monarch, steeped in the flattery of his notice and enriched with sinecures. To push their favor in this world of pickings and caresses is, perhaps, the business of their lives; and their joys may lie outside. I am in despair at our persistent ignorance. I read in the lives of our companions the same processes of reason, the same antique and fatal conflicts of the right against the wrong, and of unbitted nature with too rigid custom; I see them with our weaknesses, vain, false, inconstant against appetite, and with our stalk of virtue, devoted to the dream of an ideal; and yet, as they hurry by me on the street with tail in air, or come singly to solicit my regard, I must own the secret purport of their lives is still inscrutable to man. Is man the friend, or is he the patron only? Have they indeed forgotten nature's voice? or are those moments snatched from courtiership when they touch noses with the tinker's mongrel, the brief reward and pleasure of their artificial lives? Doubtless, when man shares with his dog the toils of a profession and the pleasures of an art, as with the shepherd or the poacher, the affection warms and strengthens till it fills the soul. But doubtless, also, the masters are, in many cases, the object of a merely interested cultus, sitting aloft like Louis Quatorze, giving and receiving flattery and favor; and the dogs, like the majority of men, have but foregone their true existence and become the dupes of their ambition.

CHAPTER XIII

"A PENNY PLAIN AND TWOPENCE COLORED"

THESE words will be familiar to all students of Skelt's Juvenile Drama. That national monument, after having changed its name to Park's, to Webb's, to Redington's, and last of all to Pollock's, has now become, for the most part, a memory. Some of its pillars, like Stonehenge are still afoot, the rest clean vanished. It may be the Museum numbers a full set; and Mr. Ionides perhaps, or else her gracious Majesty, may boast their great collections; but to the plain private person they are become, like Raphaels, unattainable. I have, at different times, possessed *Aladdin, the Red Rover, The Blind Boy, The Old Oak Chest, The Wood Dæmon, Jack Sheppard, The Miller and his Men, Der Freischütz, The Smuggler, The Forest of Bondy, Robin Hood, The Waterman, Richard I., My Poll and my Partner Joe, The Inchcape Bell* (imperfect), and *Three-Fingered Jack, the Terror of Jamaica;* and I have assisted others in the illumination of *The Maid of the Inn* and *The Battle of Waterloo.* In this roll-call of stirring names you read the evidence of a happy childhood; and though not half of them are still to be procured of any living stationer, in the mind of their once happy owner all survive, kaleidoscopes of changing pictures, echoes of the past.

There stands, I fancy, to this day (but now how fallen!) a certain stationer's shop at a corner of the wide thoroughfare that joins the city of my childhood with the sea. When, upon any Saturday, we made a party to behold the ships, we passed that corner; and since in those days I loved a ship as a man loves Burgundy or daybreak, this of itself had been enough to hallow it. But there was more than that. In the Leith Walk window, all the year round, there stood displayed a theater in working order,

with a "forest set," a "combat," and a few "robbers carousing" in the slides; and below and about, dearer tenfold to me! the plays themselves, those budgets of romance, lay tumbled one upon another. Long and often have I lingered there with empty pockets. One figure, we shall say, was visible in the first plate of characters, bearded, pistol in hand, or drawing to his ear the cloth-yard arrow; I would spell the name: was it Macaire, or Long Tom Coffin, or Grindoff, 2d dress? Oh, how I would long to see the rest! how—if the name by chance were hidden—I would wonder in what play he figured, and what immortal legend justified his attitude and strange apparel! And then to go within, to announce yourself as an intending purchaser, and, closely watched, be suffered to undo those bundles and breathlessly devour those pages of gesticulating villains, epileptic combats, bosky forests, palaces and warships, frowning fortresses and prison vaults—it was a giddy joy. That shop, which was dark and smelt of Bibles, was a lodestone rock for all that bore the name of boy. They could not pass it by, nor, having entered, leave it. It was a place besieged; the shopmen, like the Jews rebuilding Salem, had a double task. They kept us at the stick's end, frowned us down, snatched each play out of our hand ere we were trusted with another; and, incredible as it may sound, used to demand of us upon our entrance, like banditti, if we came with money or with empty hand. Old Mr. Smith himself, worn out with my eternal vacillation, once swept the treasures from before me, with the cry: "I do not believe, child, that you are an intending purchaser at all!" These were the dragons of the garden; but for such joys of paradise we could have faced the Terror of Jamaica himself. Every sheet we fingered was another lightning glance into obscure, delicious story; it was like wallowing in the raw stuff of story-books. I know nothing to compare with it save now and then in dreams, when I am privileged to read in certain unwrit stories of adventure, from which I awake to find the world all vanity. The *crux* of Buridan's donkey was as nothing to the uncertainty of the boy as he handled and lingered and doted on these bundles of de-

light; there was a physical pleasure in the sight and touch of them which he would jealously prolong; and when at length the deed was done, the play selected, and the impatient shopman had brushed the rest into the gray portfolio, and the boy was forth again, a little late for dinner, the lamps springing into light in the blue winter's even, and *The Miller,* or *The Rover,* or some kindred drama clutched against his side—on what gay feet he ran, and how he laughed aloud in exultation! I can hear that laughter still. Out of all the years of my life, I can recall but one home-coming to compare with these, and that was on the night when I brought back with me the *Arabian Entertainments* in the fat, old, double-columned volume with the prints. I was just well into the story of the Hunchback, I remember, when my clergyman-grandfather (a man we counted pretty stiff) came in behind me. I grew blind with terror. But instead of ordering the book away, he said he envied me. Ah, well he might!

The purchase and the first half-hour at home, that was the summit. Thenceforth the interest declined by little and little. The fable, as set forth in the play-book, proved to be not worthy of the scenes and characters: what fable would not? Such passages as: "Scene 6. The Hermitage. Night set scene. Place back of scene 1, No. 2, at back of stage and hermitage, Fig. 2, out of set piece, R. H. in a slanting direction"—such passages, I say, though very practical, are hardly to be called good reading. Indeed, as literature, these dramas did not much appeal to me. I forget the very outline of the plots. Of *The Blind Boy,* beyond the fact that he was a most injured prince and once, I think, abducted, I know nothing. And *The Old Oak Chest,* what was it all about? that proscript (1st dress), that prodigious number of banditti, that old woman with the broom, and the magnificent kitchen in the third act (was it in the third?)—they are all fallen in a deliquium, swim faintly in my brain, and mix and vanish.

I can not deny that joy attended the illumination; nor can I quite forgive that child who, wilfully foregoing

pleasure, stoops to "twopence colored." With crimson lake (hark to the sound of it—crimson lake!—the horns of elfland are not richer on the ear)—with crimson lake and Prussian blue a certain purple is to be compounded which, for cloaks especially, Titian could not equal. The latter color with gamboge, a hated name although an exquisite pigment, supplied a green of such a savory greenness that to-day my heart regrets it. Nor can I recall without a tender weakness the very aspect of the water where I dipped my brush. Yes, there was pleasure in the painting. But when all was painted, it is needless to deny it, all was spoiled. You might, indeed, set up a scene or two to look at; but to cut the figures out was simply sacrilege; nor could any child twice court the tedium, the worry, and the long-drawn disenchantment of an actual performance. Two days after the purchase the honey had been sucked. Parents used to complain; they thought I wearied of my play. It was not so: no more than a person can be said to have wearied of his dinner when he leaves the bones and dishes; I had got the marrow of it and said grace.

Then was the time to turn to the back of the play-book and to study that enticing double file of names, where poetry, for the true child of Skelt, reigned happy and glorious like her Majesty the Queen. Much as I have traveled in these realms of gold, I have yet seen, upon that map or abstract, names of El Dorados that still haunt the ear of memory, and are still but names. *The Floating Beacon*—why was that denied me? or *The Wreck Ashore? Sixteen-String Jack*, whom I did not even guess to be a highwayman, troubled me awake and haunted my slumbers; and there is one sequence of three from that enchanted calendar that I still at times recall, like a loved verse of poetry: *Lodoiska, Silver Palace, Echo of Westminster Bridge*. Names, bare names, are surely more to children than we poor, grown-up, obliterated fools remember.

The name of Skelt itself has always seemed a part and parcel of the charm of his productions. It may be different with the rose, but the attraction of this paper drama

sensibly declined when Webb had crept into the rubric: a poor cuckoo, flaunting in Skelt's nest. And now we have reached Pollock, sounding deeper gulfs. Indeed, this name of Skelt appears so stagy and piratic, that I will adopt it boldly to design these qualities. Skeltery, then, is a quality of much art. It is even to be found, with reverence be it said, among the works of nature. The stagy is its generic name; but it is an old, insular, home-bred staginess; not French domestically British; not of to-day, but smacking of O. Smith, Fitzball, and the great age of melodrama: a peculiar fragrance haunting it; uttering its unimportant message in a tone of voice that has the charm of fresh antiquity. I will not insist upon the art of Skelt's purveyors. These wonderful characters that once so thrilled our soul with their bold attitude, array of deadly engines and incomparable costume, to-day look somewhat pallidly; the extreme hard favor of the heroine strikes me, I had almost said with pain; the villain's scowl no longer thrills me like a trumpet; and the scenes themselves, those once unparalleled landscapes, seem the efforts of a 'prentice hand. So much of fault we find; but on the other side the impartial critic rejoices to remark the presence of a great unity of gusto; of those direct clap-trap appeals, which a man is dead and buriable when he fails to answer; of the footlight glamour, the ready-made, bare-faced, transpontine picturesque, a thing not one with cold reality, but how much dearer to the mind!

The scenery of Skeltdom—or, shall we say, the kingdom of Transpontus?—had a prevailing character. Whether it set forth Poland as in *The Blind Boy,* or Bohemia with *The Miller and his Men,* or Italy with *The Old Oak Chest,* still it was Transpontus. A botanist could tell it by the plants. The hollyhock was all pervasive, running wild in deserts; the dock was common, and the bending reed; and overshadowing these were poplar, palm, potato tree, and *Quercus Skeltica*—brave growths. The caves were all emboweled in the Surreyside formation; the soil was all betrodden by the light pump of T. P. Cooke. Skelt to be sure, had yet another, an Oriental string: he held the gorgeous East in fee; and in the new quarter of Hyères,

say, in the garden of the Hotel des Iles d'Or, you may behold these blessed visions realized. But on these I will not dwell; they were an outwork; it was in the occidental scenery that Skelt was all himself. It had a strong flavor of England; it was a sort of indigestion of England and drop-scenes, and I am bound to say was charming. How the roads wander, how the castle sits upon the hill, how the sun eradiates from behind the cloud, and how the congregated clouds themselves uproll, as stiff as bolsters! Here is the cottage interior, the usual first flat, with the cloak upon the nail, the rosaries of onions, the gun and powder-horn and corner-cupboard; here is the inn (this drama must be nautical, I foresee Captain Luff and Bold Bob Bowsprit) with the red curtain, pipes, spittoons, and eight-day clock; and there again is that impressive dungeon with the chains, which was so dull to color. England, the hedgerow elms, the thin brick houses, windmills, glimpses of the navigable Thames—England, when at last I came to visit it, was only Skelt made evident: to cross the border was, for the Scotsman, to come home to Skelt; there was the inn-sign and there the horse-trough, all foreshadowed in the faithful Skelt. If, at the ripe age of fourteen years, I bought a certain cudgel, got a friend to load it, and thenceforward walked the tame ways of the earth my own ideal, radiating pure romance—still I was but a puppet in the hand of Skelt; the original of that regretted bludgeon, and surely the antitype of all the bludgeon kind, greatly improved from Cruikshank, had adorned the hand of Jonathan Wild, pl. 1. "This is mastering me," as Whitman cries, upon some lesser provocation. What am I? what are life, art, letters, the world, but what my Skelt has made them? He stamped himself upon my immaturity. The world was plain before I knew him, a poor penny world; but soon it was all colored with romance. If I go to the theater to see a good old melodrama, 'tis but Skelt a little faded. If I visit a bold scene in nature, Skelt would have been bolder; there had been certainly a castle on that mountain, and the hollow tree—that set piece—I seem to miss it in the foreground. Indeed, out of this cut-and-dry, dull, swaggering, obtrusive and infantile art,

I seem to have learned the very spirit of my life's enjoyment; met there the shadows of the characters I was to read about and love in a late future; got the romance of *Der Freischütz* long ere I was to hear of Weber on the mighty Formes; acquired a gallery of scenes and characters with which, in the silent theater of the brain, I might enact all novels and romances; and took from these rude cuts an enduring and transforming pleasure. Reader—and yourself?

A word of moral: it appears that B. Pollock, late J. Redington, No. 73 Hoxton Street, not only publishes twenty-three of these old stage favorites, but owns the necessary plates and displays a modest readiness to issue other thirty-three. If you love art, folly, or the bright eyes of children, speed to Pollock's, or to Clarke's of Garrick Street. In Pollock's list of publicanda I perceive a pair of my ancient aspirations: *Wreck Ashore* and *Sixteen-String Jack;* and I cherish the belief that when these shall see once more the light of day, B. Pollock will remember this apologist. But, indeed, I have a dream at times that is not all a dream. I seem to myself to wander in a ghostly street—E. W., I think, the postal district—close below the fool's-cap of St. Paul's, and yet within easy hearing of the echo of the Abbey bridge. There in a dim shop, low in the roof and smelling strong of glue and footlights, I find myself in quaking treaty with great Skelt himself, the aboriginal, all dusty from the tomb. I buy, with what a choking heart—I buy them all, all but the pantomimes; I pay my mental money, and go forth; and lo! the packets are dust.

CHAPTER XIV

A GOSSIP ON A NOVEL OF DUMAS'S

THE books that we reread the oftenest are not always those that we admire the most; we choose and we revisit them for many and various reasons, as we choose and revisit human friends. One or two of Scott's novels, Shakespeare, Molière, Montaigne, *The Egoist,* and the *Vicomte de Bragelonne,* form the inner circle of my intimates. Behind these comes a good troop of dear acquaintances; *The Pilgrim's Progress* in the front rank, *The Bible in Spain* not far behind. There are besides a certain number that look at me with reproach as I pass them by on my shelves: books that I once thumbed and studied: houses which were once like home to me, but where I now rarely visit. I am on these sad terms (and blush to confess it) with Wordsworth, Horace, Burns and Hazlitt. Last of all, there is the class of book that has its hour of brilliancy—glows, sings, charms, and then fades again into insignificance until the fit return. Chief of those who thus smile and frown on me by turns, I must name Virgil and Herrick, who, were they but

"Their sometime selves the same throughout the year,"

must have stood in the first company with the six names of my continual literary intimates. To these six, incongruous as they seem, I have long been faithful, and hope to be faithful to the day of death. I have never read the whole of Montaigne, but I do not like to be long without reading some of him, and my delight in what I do read never lessens. Of Shakespeare I have read all but *Richard III., Henry VI., Titus Andronicus,* and *All's Well that Ends Well;* and these, having already made all suitable endeavor, I now know that I shall never read—to make up

for which unfaithfulness I could read much of the rest for ever. Of Molière—surely the next greatest name of Christendom—I could tell a very similar story; but in a little corner of a little essay these princes are too much out of place, and I prefer to pay my fealty and pass on. How often I have read *Guy Mannering, Rob Roy,* or *Redgauntlet,* I have no means of guessing, having begun young. But it is either four or five times that I have read *The Egoist,* and either five or six that I have read the *Vicomte de Bragelonne.*

Some who would accept the others, may wonder that I should have spent so much of this brief life of ours over a work so little famous as the last. And, indeed, I am surprised myself; not at my own devotion, but the coldness of the world. My acquaintance with the *Vicomte* began, somewhat indirectly, in the year of grace 1863, when I had the advantage of studying certain illustrated dessert plates in a hotel at Nice. The name of d'Artagnan in the legends I already saluted like an old friend, for I had met it the year before in a work of Miss Yonge's. My first perusal was in one of those pirated editions that swarmed at that time out of Brussels, and ran to such a troop of neat and dwarfish volumes. I understood but little of the merits of the book; my strongest memory is of the execution of d'Eyméric and Lyodot—a strange testimony to the dulness of a boy, who could enjoy the rough-and-tumble in the Place de Grêve, and forget d'Artagnan's visits to the two financiers. My next reading was in the winter-time, when I lived alone upon the Pentlands. I would return in the early night from one of my patrols with the shepherd; a friendly face would meet me in the door, a friendly retriever scurry upstairs to fetch my slippers; and I would sit down with the *Vicomte* for a long, silent, solitary lamplight evening by the fire. And yet I know not why I call it silent, when it was enlivened with such a clatter of horseshoes, and such a rattle of musketry, and such a stir of talk; or why I call those evenings solitary in which I gained so many friends. I would rise from my book and pull the blind aside, and see the snow and the glittering hollies checker a Scotch garden, and the winter

moonlight brighten the white hills. Thence I would turn again to that crowded and sunny field of life in which it was so easy to forget myself, my cares, and my surroundings: a place busy as a city, bright as a theater, thronged with memorable faces, and sounding with delightful speech. I carried the thread of that epic into my slumbers, I woke with it unbroken, I rejoiced to plunge into the book again at breakfast, it was with a pang that I must lay it down and turn to my own labors; for no part of the world has ever seemed to me so charming as these pages, and not even my friends are quite so real, perhaps quite so dear, as d'Artagnan.

Since then I have been going to and fro at very brief intervals in my favorite book; and I have now just risen from my last (let me call it my fifth) perusal, having liked it better and admired it more seriously than ever. Perhaps I have a sense of ownership, being so well known in these six volumes. Perhaps I think that d'Artagnan delights to have me read of him, and Louis Quatorze is gratified, and Fouquet throws me a look, and Aramis, although he knows I do not love him, yet plays to me with his best graces, as to an old patron of the show. Perhaps, if I am not careful something may befall me like what befell George IV about the battle of Waterloo, and I may come to fancy the *Vicomte* one of the first, and Heaven knows the best, of my own works. At least, I avow myself a partizan; and when I compare the popularity of the *Vicomte* with that of *Monte Cristo*, or its own elder brother, the *Trois Mousquetaires*, I confess I am both pained and puzzled.

Those who have already made acquaintance with the titular hero in the pages of *Vingt Ans Après*, perhaps the name may act as a deterrent. A man might well stand back if he supposed he were to follow, for six volumes, so well-conducted, so fine-spoken, and withal so dreary a cavalier as Bragelonne. But the fear is idle. I may be said to have passed the best years of my life in these six volumes, and my acquaintance with Raoul has never gone beyond a bow; and when he, who has so long pretended to be alive, is at last suffered to pretend to be

dead, I am sometimes reminded of a saying in an earlier volume: *"Enfin, dit Miss Stewart,"*—and it was of Bragelonne she spoke—*"enfin il a fait quelquechose: c'est, ma foi! bein heureux."* I am reminded of it, as I say; and the next moment, when Athos dies of his death, and my dear d'Artagnan bursts into his storm of sobbing, I can but deplore my flippancy.

Or perhaps it is La Vallière that the reader of *Vingt Ans Après* is inclined to flee. Well, he is right there too, though not so right. Louise is no success. Her creator has spared no pains; she is well-meant, not ill-designed, sometimes has a word that rings out true; sometimes, if only for a breath, she may even engage our sympathies. But I have never envied the King his triumph. And so far from pitying Bragelonne for his defeat, I could wish him no worse (not for lack of malice, but imagination) than to be wedded to that lady. Madame enchants me; I can forgive that royal minx her most serious offenses; I can thrill and soften with the King on that memorable occasion when he goes to upbraid and remains to flirt; and when it comes to the *"Allons, aimez-moi donc,"* it is my heart that melts in the bosom of de Guiche. Not so with Louise. Readers can not fail to have remarked that what an author tells us of the beauty or the charm of his creatures goes for naught; that we knew instantly better; that the heroine can not open her mouth but what, all in a moment, the fine phrases of preparation fall from round her like the robes from Cinderella, and she stands before us, self-betrayed, as a poor, ugly, sickly wench, or perhaps a strapping market-woman. Authors, at least, know it well; a heroine will too often start the trick of "getting ugly"; and no disease is more difficult to cure; I said authors; but indeed I had a side eye to one author in particular, with whose works I am very well acquainted, though I can not read them, and who has spent many vigils in this cause, sitting beside his ailing puppets and (like a magician) wearying his art to restore them to youth and beauty. There are others who ride too high for these misfortunes. Who doubts the loveliness of Rosalind? Arden itself was not more lovely. Who ever

questioned the perennial charm of Rose Jocelyn, Lucy Desborough, or Clara Middleton? fair women with fair names, the daughters of George Meredith. Elizabeth Bennet has but to speak, and I am at her knees. Ah! these are the creators of desirable women. They would never have fallen in the mud with Dumas and poor La Vallière. It is my only consolation that not one of all of them, except the first, could have plucked at the mustache of d'Artagnan.

Or perhaps, again, a proportion of readers stumble at the threshold. In so vast a mansion there was sure to be back stairs and kitchen offices where no one would delight to linger; but it was at least unhappy that the vestibule should be so badly lighted; and until, in the seventeenth chapter, d'Artagnan sets off to seek his friends, I must confess, the book goes heavily enough. But, from thenceforward, what a feast is spread! Monk kidnaped; d'Artagnan enriched; Mazarin's death; the ever delectable adventure of Belle Isle, wherein Aramis outwits d'Artagnan, with its epilogue (vol. v. chap. xxviii), where d'Artagnan regains the moral superiority; the love adventures at Fontainebleau, with St. Aignan's story of the dryad and the business of de Guiche, de Wardes, and Manicamp; Aramis made general of the Jesuits; Aramis at the Bastille; the night talk in the forest of Sénart; Belle Isle again, with the death of Porthos; and last, but not least, the taming of d'Artagnan the untamable, under the lash of the young king. What other novel has such epic variety and nobility of incident? often, if you will, impossible; often of the order of an Arabian story; and yet all based in human nature. For if you come to that, what novel has more human nature? not studied with the microscope, but seen largely, in plain daylight, with the natural eye? What novel has more good sense, and gaiety, and wit, and unflagging, admirable literary skill? Good souls, I suppose, must sometimes read it in the blackguard travesty of a translation. But there is no style so untranslatable; light as a whipped trifle, strong as silk; wordy like a village tale; pat like a general's despatch; with every fault, yet never tedious; with no merit, yet inimitably

right. And, once more, to make an end of commendations, what novel is inspired with a more unstrained or a more wholesome morality?

Yes; in spite of Miss Yonge, who introduced me to the name of d'Artagnan only to dissuade me from a nearer knowledge of the man, I have to add morality. There is no quite good book without a good morality; but the world is wide, and so are morals. Out of two people who have dipped into Sir Richard Burton's *Thousand and One Nights,* one shall have been offended by the animal details; another to whom these were harmless, perhaps even pleasing, shall yet have been shocked in his turn by the rascality and cruelty of all the characters. Of two readers, again, one shall have been pained by the morality of a religious memoir, one by that of the *Vicomte de Bragelonne.* And the point is that neither need be wrong. We shall always shock each other both in life and art; we can not get the sun into our pictures, nor the abstract right (if there be such a thing) into our books; enough if, in the one, there glimmer some hint of the great light that blinds us from heaven; enough if, on the other, there shine, even upon foul details, a spirit of magnanimity. I would scarce send to the *Vicomte* a reader who was in quest of what we may call puritan morality. The ventripotent mulatto, the great eater, worker, earner and waster, the man of much and witty laughter, the man of the great heart and alas! of the doubtful honesty, is a figure not yet clearly set before the world; he still awaits a sober and yet genial portrait; but with whatever art that may be touched, and whatever indulgence, it will not be the portrait of a precisian. Dumas was certainly not thinking of himself, but of Planchet, when he put into the mouth of d'Artagnan's old servant this excellent profession: "*Monsieur, j'étais une de ces bonnes pâtes d'hommes que Dieu a fait pour s'animer pendant un certain temps et pour trouver bonnes toutes choses qui accompagnent leur séjour sur la terre.*" He was thinking, as I say, of Planchet, to whom the words are aptly fitted; but they were fitted also to Planchet's creator; and perhaps this struck him as he wrote, for observe what follows: "*D'Artagnan*

s'assit alors près de la fenêtre, et, cette philosophie de Planchet lui ayant paru solide, il y rêva." In a man who finds all things good, you will scarce expect much zeal for negative virtues: the active alone will have a charm for him; abstinence, however wise, however kind, will always seem to such a judge entirely mean and partly impious. So with Dumas. Chastity is not near his heart; nor yet, to his own sore cost, that virtue of frugality which is the armor of the artist. Now, in the *Vicomte*, he had much to do with the contest of Fouquet and Colbert. Historic justice should be all upon the side of Colbert, of official honesty, and fiscal competence. And Dumas knew it well: three times at least he shows his knowledge; once it is but flashed upon us and received with the laughter of Fouquet himself, in the jesting controversy in the gardens of Sainte Mandé; once it is touched on by Aramis in the forest of Sénart; in the end, it is set before us clearly in one dignified speech of the triumphant Colbert. But in Fouquet, the waster, the lover of good cheer and wit and art, the swift transactor of much business, "*l'homme de bruit, l'homme de plaisir, l'homme qui n'est que parceque les autres sont*," Dumas saw something of himself and drew the figure the more tenderly. It is to me even touching to see how he insists on Fouquet's honor; not seeing, you might think, that unflawed honor is impossible to spendthrifts; but rather, perhaps, in the light of his own life, seeing it too well, and clinging the more to what was left. Honor can survive a wound; it can live and thrive without a member. The man rebounds from his disgrace; he begins fresh foundations on the ruins of the old; and when his sword is broken, he will do valiantly with his dagger. So it is with Fouquet in the book; so it was with Dumas on the battlefield of life.

To cling to what is left of any damaged quality is virtue in the man; but perhaps to sing its praises is scarcely to be called morality in the writer. And it is elsewhere, it is in the character of d'Artagnan, that we must look for that spirit of morality, which is one of the chief merits of the book, makes one of the main joys of its perusal, and sets it high above more popular rivals. Athos, with

the coming of years, has declined too much into the preacher, and the preacher of a sapless creed; but d'Artagnan has mellowed into a man so witty, rough, kind and upright, that he takes the heart by storm. There is nothing of the copy-book about his virtues, nothing of the drawing-room in his fine, natural civility; he will sail near the wind; he is no district visitor—no Wesley or Robespierre; his conscience is void of all refinement whether for good or evil; but the whole man rings true like a good sovereign. Readers who have approached the *Vicomte,* not across country, but by the legitimate, five-volumed avenue of the *Mousquetaires* and *Vingt Ans Après,* will not have forgotten d'Artagnan's ungentlemanly and perfectly improbable trick upon Milady. What a pleasure it is, then, what a reward, and how agreeable a lesson, to see the old captain humble himself to the son of the man whom he had personated! Here and throughout, if I am to choose virtues for myself or my friends, let me choose the virtues of d'Artagnan. I do not say there is no character as well drawn in Shakespeare; I do not say there is none that I love so wholly. There are many spiritual eyes that seem to spy upon our actions—eyes of the dead and the absent, whom we imagine to behold us in our most private hours, and whom we fear and scruple to offend: our witnesses and judges. And among these, even if you should think me childish, I must count my d'Artagnan—not d'Artagnan of the memoirs whom Thackeray pretended to prefer—a preference, I take the freedom of saying, in which he stands alone; not the d'Artagnan of flesh and blood, but him of the ink and paper; not Nature's but Dumas's. And this is the particular crown and triumph of the artist—not to be true merely, but to be lovable; not simply to convince, but to enchant.

There is yet another point in the *Vicomte* which I find incomparable. I can recall no other work of the imagination in which the end of life is represented with so nice a tact. I was asked the other day if Dumas made me laugh or cry. Well, in this my late fifth reading of the *Vicomte,* I did laugh once at the small Coquelin de Volière business, and was perhaps a thought surprised at having done so:

to make up for it, I smiled continually. But for tears, I do not know. If you put a pistol to my throat, I must own the tale trips upon a very airy foot—within a measurable distance of unreality; and for those who like the big guns to be discharged and the great passions to appear authentically, it may even seem inadequate from first to last. Not so to me; I can not count that a poor dinner, or a poor book, where I meet with those I love; and, above all, in this last volume, I find a singular charm of spirit. It breathes a pleasant and a tonic sadness, always brave, never hysterical. Upon the crowded, noisy life of this long tale, evening gradually falls; and the lights are extinguished, and the heroes pass away one by one. One by one they go, and not a regret embitters their departure; the young succeed them in their places, Louis Quatorze is swelling larger and shining broader, another generation and another France dawn on the horizon; but for us and these old men whom we have loved so long, the inevitable end draws near and is welcome. To read this well is to anticipate experience. Ah, if only when these hours of the long shadows fall for us in reality and not in figure, we may hope to face them with a mind as quiet!

But my paper is running out; the siege guns are firing on the Dutch frontier; and I must say adieu for the fifth time to my old comrade fallen on the field of glory. *Adieu* —rather *au revoir!* Yet a sixth time, dearest d'Artagnan, we shall kidnap Monk and take horse together for Belle Isle.

CHAPTER XV

A GOSSIP ON ROMANCE

IN anything fit to be called by the name of reading, the process itself should be absorbing and voluptuous; we should gloat over a book, be rapt clean out of ourselves, and rise from the perusal, our mind filled with the busiest, kaleidoscopic dance of images, incapable of sleep or of continuous thought. The words, if the book be eloquent, should run thenceforward in our ears like the noise of breakers, and the story, if it be a story, repeat itself in a thousand colored pictures to the eye. It was for this last pleasure that we read so closely, and loved our books so dearly, in the bright, troubled period of boyhood. Eloquence and thought, character and conversation, were but obstacles to brush aside as we dug blithely after a certain sort of incident, like a pig for truffles. For my part, I liked a story to begin with an old wayside inn where, "toward the close of the year 17—," several gentlemen in three-cocked hats were playing bowls. A friend of mine preferred the Malabar coast in a storm, with a ship beating to windward, and a scowling fellow of Herculean proportions striding along the beach; he, to be sure, was a pirate. This was further afield than my home-keeping fancy loved to travel, and designed altogether for a larger canvas than the tales that I affected. Give me a highwayman and I was full to the brim: a Jacobite would do, but the highwayman was my favorite dish. I can still hear that merry clatter of the hoofs along the moonlit lane; night and the coming of day are still related in my mind with the doings of John Rann or Jerry Abershaw; and the words "post-chaise," the "great North road," "ostler," and "nag" still sound in my ears like poetry. One and all, at least, and each with his particular fancy, we read story-books in childhood, not for eloquence or

character or thought, but for some quality of the brute incident. That quality was not mere bloodshed or wonder. Although each of these was welcome in its place, the charm for the sake of which we read depended on something different from either. My elders used to read novels aloud; and I can still remember four different passages which I heard, before I was ten, with the same keen and lasting pleasure. One I discovered long afterward to be the admirable opening of *What will he Do with It:* it was no wonder that I was pleased with that. The other three still remain unidentified. One is a little vague; it was about a dark, tall house at night, and people groping on the stairs by the light that escaped from the open door of a sickroom. In another, a lover left a ball, and went walking in a cool, dewy park, whence he could watch the lighted windows and the figures of the dancers as they moved. This was the most sentimental impression I think I had yet received, for a child is somewhat deaf to the sentimental. In the last, a poet, who had been tragically wrangling with his wife, walked forth on the seabeach on a tempestuous night and witnessed the horrors of a wreck.[1] Different as they are, all these early favorites have a common note—they have all a touch of the romantic.

Drama is the poetry of conduct, romance the poetry of circumstance. The pleasure that we take in life is of two sorts—the active and the passive. Now we are conscious of a great command over our destiny; anon we are lifted up by circumstance, as by a breaking wave, and dashed we know not how into the future. Now we are pleased by our conduct, anon merely pleased by our surroundings. It would be hard to say which of these modes of satisfaction is the more effective, but the latter is surely the more constant. Conduct is three parts of life, they say; but I think they put it high. There is a vast deal in life and letters both which is not immoral, but simply a-moral; which either does not regard the human will at all, or deals with it in obvious and healthy relations; where the interest

[1] Since traced by many obliging correspondents to the gallery of Charles Kingsley.

turns, not upon what a man shall choose to do, but on how he manages to do it; not on the passionate slips and hesitations of the conscience, but on the problems of the body and of the practical intelligence, in clean, open-air adventure, the shock of arms or the diplomacy of life. With such material as this it is impossible to build a play, for the serious theater exists solely on moral grounds, and is a standing proof of the dissemination of the human conscience. But it is possible to build, upon this ground, the most joyous of verses, and the most lively, beautiful, and buoyant tales.

One thing in life calls for another; there is a fitness in events and places. The sight of a pleasant arbor puts it in our mind to sit there. One place suggests work, another idleness, a third early rising and long rambles in the dew. The effect of night, of any flowing water, of lighted cities, of the peep of day, of ships, of the open ocean, calls up in the mind an army of anonymous desires and pleasures. Something, we feel, should happen; we know not what, yet we proceed in quest of it. And many of the happiest hours of life fleet by us in this vain attendance on the genius of the place and moment. It is thus that tracts of young fir, and low rocks that reach into deep soundings, particularly torture and delight me. Something must have happened in such places, and perhaps ages back, to members of my race; and when I was a child I tried in vain to invent appropriate games for them, as I still try, just as vainly, to fit them with the proper story. Some places speak distinctly. Certain dank gardens cry aloud for a murder; certain old houses demand to be haunted; certain coasts are set apart for shipwreck. Other spots again seem to abide their destiny, suggestive and impenetrable, "miching mallecho." The inn at Burford Bridge, with its arbors and green garden and silent, eddying river—though it is known already as the place where Keats wrote some of his *Endymion* and Nelson parted from his Emma—still seems to wait the coming of the appropriate legend. Within these ivied walls, behind these old green shutters, some further business smolders, waiting for its hour. The old Hawes Inn

at the Queen's Ferry makes a similar call upon my fancy. There it stands, apart from the town, beside the pier, in a climate of its own, half inland, half marine—in front, the ferry bubbling with the tide and the guardship swinging to her anchor; behind, the old garden with the trees. Americans seek it already for the sake of Lovel and Oldbuck, who dined there at the beginning of the *Antiquary*. But you need not tell me—that is not all; there is some story, unrecorded or not yet complete, which must express the meaning of that inn more fully. So it is with names and faces; so it is with incidents that are idle and inconclusive in themselves, and yet seem like the beginning of some quaint romance, which the all-careless author leaves untold. How many of these romances have we not seen determine at their birth; how many people have met us with a look of meaning in their eye, and sunk at once into trivial acquaintances; to how many places have we not drawn near, with express intimations—"here my destiny awaits me"—and we have but dined there and passed on! I have lived both at the Hawes and Burford in a perpetual flutter, on the heels, as it seemed, of some adventure that should justify the place; but though the feeling had me to bed at night and called me again at morning in one unbroken round of pleasure and suspense, nothing befell me in either worth remark. The man or the hour had not yet come; but some day, I think, a boat shall put off from the Queen's Ferry, fraught with a dear cargo, and some frosty night a horseman, on a tragic errand, rattle with his whip upon the green shutters of the inn at Burford.[2]

Now, this is one of the natural appetites with which any lively literature has to count. The desire for knowledge, I had almost added to the desire for meat, is not more deeply seated than this demand for fit and striking incident. The dullest of clowns tells, or tries to tell, himself a story, as the feeblest of children uses invention in his play; and even as the imaginative grown person, joining in the game, at once enriches it with many delightful cir-

[2] Since the above was written I have tried to launch the boat with my own hands in *Kidnapped*. Some day, perhaps, I may try a rattle at the shutters.

cumstances, the great creative writer shows us the realization and the apotheosis of the day-dreams of common men. His stories may be nourished with the realities of life, but their true mark is to satisfy the nameless longings of the reader, and to obey the ideal laws of the day-dream. The right kind of thing should fall out in the right kind of place; the right kind of thing should follow; and not only the characters talk aptly and think naturally, but all the circumstances in a tale answer one to another like notes in music. The threads of a story come from time to time together and make a picture in the web; the characters fall from time to time into some attitude to each other or to nature, which stamps the story home like an illustration. Crusoe recoiling from the footprint, Achilles shouting over against the Trojans, Ulysses bending the great bow, Christian running with his fingers in his ears, these are each culminating moments in the legend, and each has been printed on the mind's eye forever. Other things we may forget; we may forget the words, although they are beautiful; we may forget the author's comment, although perhaps it was ingenious and true; but these epoch-making scenes, which put the last mark of truth upon a story and fill up, at one blow, our capacity for sympathetic pleasure, we so adopt into the very bosom of our mind that neither time nor tide can efface or weaken the impression. This, then, is the plastic part of literature: to embody character, thought, or emotion in some act or attitude that shall be remarkably striking to the mind's eye. This is the highest and hardest thing to do in words; the thing which, once accomplished, equally delights the schoolboy and the sage, and makes, in its own right, the quality of epics. Compared with this, all other purposes in literature, except the purely lyrical or the purely philosophic, are bastard in nature, facile of execution, and feeble in result. It is one thing to write about the inn at Burford, or to describe scenery with the word-painters; it is quite another to seize on the heart of the suggestion and make a country famous with a legend. It is one thing to remark and to dissect, with the most cutting logic, the complications of life, and of the human spirit;

it is quite another to give them body and blood in the story of Ajax or Hamlet. The first is literature, but the second is something besides, for it is likewise art.

English people of the present day[3] are apt, I know not why, to look somewhat down on incident, and reserve their admiration for the clink of teaspoons and the accents of the curate. It is thought clever to write a novel with no story at all, or at least with a very dull one. Reduced even to the lowest terms, a certain interest can be communicated by the art of narrative; a sense of human kinship stirred; and a kind of monotonous fitness, comparable to the words and air of *Sandy's Mull,* preserved among the infinitesimal occurrences recorded. Some people work, in this manner, with even a strong touch. Mr. Trollope's inimitable clergymen naturally arise to the mind in this connection. But even Mr. Trollope does not confine himself to chronicling small beer. Mr. Crawley's collision with the Bishop's wife, Mr. Melnotte dallying in the deserted banquet-room, are typical incidents, epically conceived, fitly embodying a crisis. Or again look at Thackeray. If Rawdon Crawley's blow were not delivered, *Vanity Fair* would cease to be a work of art. That scene is the chief ganglion of the tale; and the discharge of energy from Rawdon's fist is the reward and consolation of the reader. The end of *Esmond* is a yet wider excursion from the author's customary fields; the scene at Castlewood is pure Dumas; the great and wily English borrower has here borrowed from the great unblushing French thief; as usual, he has borrowed admirably well, and the breaking of the sword rounds off the best of all his books with a manly, martial note. But perhaps nothing can more strongly illustrate the necessity for marking incident than to compare the living fame of *Robinson Crusoe* with the discredit of *Clarissa Harlowe. Clarissa* is a book of a far more startling import, worked out, on a great canvas, with inimitable courage and unflagging art. It contains wit, character, passion, plot, conversations full of spirit and insight, letters sparkling with unstrained humanity; and if the death of the heroine be somewhat frigid and artifi-

[3] 1882.

cial, the last days of the hero strike the only note of what we now call Byronism, between the Elizabethans and Byron himself. And yet a little story of a shipwrecked sailor, with not a tenth part of the style nor a thousandth part of the wisdom, exploring none of the arcana of humanity and deprived of the perennial interest of love, goes on from edition to edition, ever young, while *Clarissa* lies upon the shelves unread. A friend of mine, a Welsh blacksmith, was twenty-five years old and could neither read nor write, when he heard a chapter of *Robinson* read aloud in a farm kitchen. Up to that moment he had sat content, huddled in his ignorance, but he left that farm another man. There were day-dreams, it appeared, divine day-dreams, written and printed and bound, and to be bought for money and enjoyed at pleasure. Down he sat that day, painfully learned to read Welsh, and returned to borrow the book. It had been lost, nor could he find another copy but one that was in English. Down he sat once more, learned English, and at length, and with entire delight, read *Robinson*. It is like the story of a love-chase. If he had heard a letter from *Clarissa*, would he have been fired with the same chivalrous ardor? I wonder. Yet *Clarissa* has every quality that can be shown in prose, one alone excepted—pictorial or picture-making romance. While *Robinson* depends, for the most part and with the overwhelming majority of its readers, on the charm of circumstance.

In the highest achievements of the art of words, the dramatic and the pictorial, the moral and romantic interest, rise and fall together by a common and organic law. Situation is animated with passion, passion clothed upon with situation. Neither exists for itself, but each inheres indissolubly with the other. This is high art; and not only the highest art possible in words, but the highest art of all, since it combines the greatest mass and diversity of the elements of truth and pleasure. Such are epics, and the few prose tales that have the epic weight. But as from a school of works, aping the creative, incident and romance are ruthlessly discarded, so may character and drama be omitted or subordinated to romance. There is

one book, for example, more generally loved than Shakespeare, that captivates in childhood, and still delights in age—I mean the *Arabian Nights*—where you shall look in vain for moral or for intellectual interest. No human face or voice greets us among that wooden crowd of kings and genies, sorcerers and beggarmen. Adventure, on the most naked terms, furnishes forth the entertainment and is found enough. Dumas approaches perhaps nearest of any modern to these Arabian authors in the purely material charm of some of his romances. The early part of *Monte Cristo,* down to the finding of the treasure, is a piece of perfect story-telling; the man never breathed who shared these moving incidents without a tremor; and yet Faria is a thing of packthread and Dantès little more than a name. The sequel is one long-drawn error, gloomy, bloody, unnatural and dull; but as for these early chapters, I do not believe there is another volume extant where you can breathe the same unmingled atmosphere of romance. It is very thin and light, to be sure, as on a high mountain; but it is brisk and clear and sunny in proportion. I saw the other day, with envy, an old and very clever lady setting forth on a second or third voyage into *Monte Cristo.* Here are stories which powerfully affect the reader, which can be reperused at any age, and where the characters are no more than puppets. The bony fist of the showman visibly propels them; their springs are an open secret; their faces are of wood, their bellies filled with bran; and yet we thrillingly partake of their adventures. And the point may be illustrated still further. The last interview between Lucy and Richard Feveril is pure drama; more than that, it is the strongest scene, since Shakespeare, in the English tongue. Their first meeting by the river, on the other hand, is pure romance; it has nothing to do with character; it might happen to any other boy and maiden, and be none the less delightful for the change. And yet I think he would be a bold man who should choose between these passages. Thus, in the same book, we may have two scenes, each capital in its order: in the one, human passion, deep calling unto deep, shall utter its genuine voice; in the second, according

circumstances, like instruments in tune, shall build up a trivial but desirable incident, such as we love to prefigure for ourselves; and in the end, in spite of the critics, we may hesitate to give the preference to either. The one may ask more genius—I do not say it does; but at least the other dwells as clearly in the memory.

True romantic art, again, makes a romance of all things. It reaches into the highest abstraction of the ideal; it does not refuse the most pedestrian realism. *Robinson Crusoe* is as realistic as it is romantic; both qualities are pushed to an extreme, and neither suffers. Nor does romance depend upon the material importance of the incidents. To deal with strong and deadly elements, banditti, pirates, war and murder, is to conjure with great names, and, in the event of failure, to double the disgrace. The arrival of Haydn and Consuelo at the Canon's villa is a very trifling incident; yet we may read a dozen boisterous stories from beginning to end, and not receive so fresh and stirring an impression of adventure. It was the scene of Crusoe at the wreck, if I remember rightly, that so bewitched my blacksmith. Nor is the fact surprising. Every single article the castaway recovers from the hulk is "a joy for ever" to the man who reads of them. They are the things that should be found, and the bare enumeration stirs the blood. I found a glimmer of the same interest the other day in a new book, *The Sailor's Sweetheart,* by Mr. Clark Russell. The whole business of the brig *Morning Star* is very rightly felt and spiritedly written; but the clothes, the books and the money satisfy the reader's mind like things to eat. We are dealing here with the old cut-and-dry, legitimate interest of treasure trove. But even treasure trove can be made dull. There are few people who have not groaned under the plethora of goods that fell to the lot of the *Swiss Family Robinson,* that dreary family. They found article after article, creature after creature, from milk kine to pieces of ordnance, a whole consignment; but no informing taste had presided over the selection, there was no smack or relish in the invoice; and these riches left the fancy cold. The box of goods in Verne's *Mysterious Island* is another case in

point: there was no gusto and no glamour about that; it might have come from a shop. But the two hundred and seventy-eight Australian sovereigns on board the *Morning Star* fell upon me like a surprise that I had expected; whole vistas of secondary stories, besides the one in hand, radiated forth from that discovery, as they radiate from a striking particular in life; and I was made for the moment as happy as a reader has a right to be.

To come at all at the nature of this quality of romance, we must bear in mind the peculiarity of our attitude to any art. No art produces illusion; in the theater we never forget that we are in the theater; and while we read a story, we sit wavering between two minds, now merely clapping our hands at the merit of the performance, now condescending to take an active part in fancy with the characters. This last is the triumph of romantic story-telling: when the reader consciously plays at being the hero, the scene is a good scene. Now in character studies the pleasure that we take is critical; we watch, we approve, we smile at incongruities, we are moved to sudden heats of sympathy with courage, suffering or virtue. But the characters are still themselves, they are not us; the more clearly they are depicted, the more widely do they stand away from us, the more imperiously do they thrust us back into our place as a spectator. I can not identify myself with Rawdon Crawley or with Eugène de Rastignac, for I have scarce a hope or fear in common with them. It is not character but incident that woos us out of our reserve. Something happens as we desire to have it happen to ourselves; some situation, that we have long dallied with in fancy, is realized in the story with enticing and appropriate details. Then we forget the characters; then we push the hero aside; then we plunge into the tale in our own person and bathe in fresh experience; and then, and then only, do we say we have been reading a romance. It is not only pleasurable things that we imagine in our day-dreams; there are lights in which we are willing to contemplate even the idea of our own death; ways in which it seems as if it would amuse us to be cheated, wounded or calumniated. It is thus possible to construct a story, even of

tragic import, in which every incident, detail and trick of circumstance shall be welcome to the reader's thoughts. Fiction is to the grown man what play is to the child; it is there that he changes the atmosphere and tenor of his life; and when the game so chimes with his fancy that he can join in it with all his heart, when it pleases him at every turn, when he loves to recall it and dwells upon its recollection with entire delight, fiction is called romance.

Walter Scott is out and away the king of the romantics, *The Lady of the Lake* has no indisputable claim to be a poem beyond the inherent fitness and desirability of the tale. It is just such a story as a man would make up for himself, walking, in the best health and temper, through just such scenes as it is laid in. Hence it is that a charm dwells undefinable among these slovenly verses, as the unseen cuckoo fills the mountains with his note; hence, even after we have flung the book aside, the scenery and adventures remain present to the mind, a new and green possession, not unworthy of that beautiful name, *The Lady of the Lake,* or that direct, romantic opening—one of the most spirited and poetical in literature—"The stag at eve had drunk his fill." The same strength and the same weaknesses adorn and disfigure the novels. In that ill-written, ragged book, *The Pirate,* the figure of Cleveland—cast up by the sea on the resounding foreland of Dunrossness—moving, with the blood on his hands and the Spanish words on his tongue among the simple islanders—singing a serenade under the window of his Shetland mistress—is conceived in the very highest manner of romantic invention. The words of his song, "Through groves of palm," sung in such a scene and by such a lover, clench, as in a nutshell, the emphatic contrast upon which the tale is built. In *Guy Mannering,* again, every incident is delightful to the imagination; and the scene when Harry Bertram lands at Ellangowan is a model instance of romantic method.

"'I remember the tune well,' he says, 'though I can not guess what should at present so strongly recall it to my memory.' He took his flageolet from his pocket and played a simple melody. Apparently the tune awoke the

corresponding associations of a damsel.... She immediately took up the song—

> " 'Are these the links of Forth, she said;
> Or are they the crooks of Dee,
> Or the bonny woods of Warroch Head
> That I so fain would see?'

" 'By Heaven!' said Bertram, 'it is the very ballad.' "

On this quotation two remarks fall to be made. First, as an instance of modern feeling for romance, this famous touch of the flageolet and the old song is selected by Miss Braddon for omission. Miss Braddon's idea of a story, like Mrs. Todgers's idea of a wooden leg, were something strange to have expounded. As a matter of personal experience, Meg's appearance to old Mr. Bertram on the road, the ruins of Derncleugh, the scene of the flageolet, and the Dominie's recognition of Harry, are the four strong notes that continue to ring in the mind after the book is laid aside. The second point is still more curious. The reader will observe a mark of excision in the passage as quoted by me. Well, here is how it runs in the original: "a damsel, who, close behind a fine spring about half-way down the descent, and which had once supplied the castle with water, was engaged in bleaching linen." A man who gave in such copy would be discharged from the staff of a daily paper. Scott has forgotten to prepare the reader for the presence of the "damsel"; he has forgotten to mention the spring and its relation to the ruin; and, now, face to face with his omission, instead of trying back and starting fair, crams all this matter, tail foremost, into a single shambling sentence. It is not merely bad English or bad style; it is abominably bad narrative besides.

Certainly the contrast is remarkable; and it is one that throws a strong light upon the subject of this paper. For here we have a man of the finest creative instinct touching with perfect certainty and charm the romantic junctures of his story; and we find him utterly careless, almost, it would seem, incapable, in the technical matter of style, and not only frequently weak, but frequently wrong in points of drama. In character parts, indeed, and partic-

ularly in the Scotch, he was delicate, strong, and truthful; but the trite, obliterated features of too many of his heroes have already wearied two generations of readers. At times his characters will speak with something far beyond propriety with a true heroic note; but on the next page they will be wading wearily forward with an ungrammatical and undramatic rigmarole of words. The man who could conceive and write the character of Elspeth of the Craigburnfoot, as Scott has conceived and written it, had not only splendid romantic, but splendid tragic gifts. How comes it, then, that he could so often fob us off with languid, inarticulate twaddle?

It seems to me that the explanation is to be found in the very quality of his surprising merits. As his books are play to the reader so were they play to him. He conjured up the romantic with delight, but he had hardly patience to describe it. He was a great day-dreamer, a seer of fit and beautiful and humorous visions, but hardly a great artist; hardly, in the manful sense, an artist at all. He pleased himself, so he pleases us. Of the pleasures of his art he tasted fully; but of its toils and vigils and distresses never man knew less. A great romantic —an idle child.

CHAPTER XVI

A HUMBLE REMONSTRANCE[1]

I

WE have recently[2] enjoyed a quite peculiar pleasure; hearing, in some detail, the opinions, about the art they practise, of Mr. Walter Besant and Mr. Henry James; two men certainly of very different caliber; Mr. James so precise of outline, so cunning of fence, so scrupulous of finish, and Mr. Besant so genial, so friendly, with so persuasive and humorous a vein of whim: Mr. James the very type of the deliberate artist, Mr. Besant the impersonation of good nature. That such doctors should differ will excite no great surprise; but one point in which they seem to agree fills me, I confess, with wonder. For they are both content to talk about "the art of fiction"; and Mr. Besant, waxing exceedingly bold, goes on to oppose this so-called "art of fiction" to the "art of poetry." By the art of poetry he can mean nothing but the art of verse, an art of handicraft, and only comparable with the art of prose. For that heat and height of sane emotion which we agree to call by the name of poetry, is but a libertine and vagrant quality; present, at times, in any art, more often absent from them all; too seldom present in the prose novel, too frequently absent from the ode and epic. Fiction is in the same case; it is no substantive art, but an element which enters largely into all the arts but literature. Homer, Wordsworth, Phidias, Hogarth, and Salvini, all deal in fiction; and yet I do not suppose that either Hogarth or Salvini, to mention but

[1] This paper, which does not otherwise fit the present volume, is reprinted here as the proper continuation of the last.

[2] 1884.

these two, entered in any degree into the scope of Mr. Besant's interesting lecture or Mr. James's charming essay. The art of fiction, then, regarded as a definition, is both too ample and too scanty. Let me suggest another; let me suggest that what both Mr. James and Mr. Besant had in view was neither more nor less than the art of narrative.

But Mr. Besant is anxious to speak solely of "the modern English novel," the stay and bread-winner of Mr. Mudie; and in the author of the most pleasing novel on that roll, *All Sorts and Conditions of Men,* the desire is natural enough. I can conceive then, that he would hasten to propose two additions, and read thus: the art of *fictitious* narrative *in prose.*

Now the fact of the existence of the modern English novel is not to be denied; materially, with its three volumes, leaded type, and gilded lettering, it is easily distinguishable from other forms of literature; but to talk at all fruitfully of any branch of art, it is needful to build our definitions on some more fundamental ground than binding. Why, then, are we to add "in prose"? *The Odyssey* appears to me the best of romances; *The Lady of the Lake* to stand high in the second order; and Chaucer's tales and prologues to contain more of the matter and art of the modern English novel than the whole treasury of Mr. Mudie. Whether a narrative be written in blank verse of the Spenserian stanza, in the long period of Gibbon or the chipped phrase of Charles Reade, the principles of the art of narrative must be equally observed. The choice of a noble and swelling style in prose affects the problem of narration in the same way, if not to the same degree, as the choice of measured verse; for both imply a closer synthesis of events, a higher key of dialogue, and a more picked and stately strain of words. If you are to refuse *Don Juan,* it is hard to see why you should include *Zanoni* or (to bracket works of very different value) *The Scarlet Letter;* and by what discrimination are you to open your doors to *The Pilgrim's Progress* and close them on *The Faery Queen?* To bring things closer home, I will here propound to Mr. Besant a conun-

drum. A narrative called *Paradise Lost* was written in English verse by one John Milton; what was it then? It was next translated by Chateaubriand into French prose; and what was it then? Lastly, the French translation was, by some inspired compatriot of George Gilfillan (and of mine) turned bodily into an English novel; and, in the name of clearness, what was it then?

But, once more, why should we add "fictitious"? The reason why is obvious. The reason why not, if something more recondite, does not want for weight. The art of narrative, in fact, is the same, whether it is applied to the selection and illustration of a real series of events or of an imaginary series. Boswell's *Life of Johnson* (a work of cunning and inimitable art) owes its success to the same technical maneuvers as (let us say) *Tom Jones:* the clear conception of certain characters of man, the choice and presentation of certain incidents out of a great number that offered, in the invention (yes, invention) and preservation of a certain key in dialogue. In which these things are done with the more art—in which the greater air of nature—readers will differently judge. Boswell's is, indeed, a very special case, and almost a generic; but it is not only in Boswell, it is in every biography with any salt of life, it is in every history where events and men, rather than ideas, are presented—in Tacitus, in Carlyle, in Michelet, in Macaulay—that the novelist will find many of his own methods most conspicuously and adroitly handled. He will find besides that he, who is free—who has the right to invent or steal a missing incident, who has the right, more precious still, of wholesale omission—is frequently defeated, and with all his advantages, leaves a less strong impression of reality and passion. Mr. James utters his mind with a becoming fervor on the sanctity of truth to the novelist; on a more careful examination truth will seem a word of very debatable propriety, not only for the labors of the novelist, but for those of the historian. No art—to use the daring phrase of Mr. James—can successfully "compete with life"; and the art that seeks to do so is condemned to perish *montibus aviis.* Life goes before us, infinite in complication; at-

tended by the most various and surprising meteors; appealing at once to the eye, to the ear, to the mind—the seat of wonder, to the touch—so thrillingly delicate, and to the belly—so imperious when starved. It combines and employs in its manifestation the method and material, not of one art only, but of all the arts. Music is but an arbitrary trifling with a few of life's majestic chords; painting is but a shadow of its pageantry of light and color; literature does but dryly indicate that wealth of incident, of moral obligation, of virtue, vice, action, rapture and agony, with which it teems. To "compete with life," whose sun we can not look upon, whose passions and diseases waste and slay us—to compete with the flavor of wine, the beauty of the dawn, the scorching of fire, the bitterness of death and separation—here is, indeed, a projected escalade of heaven; here are, indeed, labors for a Hercules in a dress coat, armed with a pen and a dictionary to depict the passions, armed with a tube of superior flake-white to paint the portrait of the insufferable sun. No art is true in this sense: none can "compete with life"; not even history, built indeed of indisputable facts, but these facts robbed of their vivacity and sting; so that even when we read of the sack of a city or the fall of an empire, we are surprised, and justly commend the author's talent, if our pulse be quickened. And mark, for a last *differentia,* that this quickening of the pulse is, in almost every case, purely agreeable; that these phantom reproductions of experience, even at their most acute, convey decided pleasure; while experience itself, in the cockpit of life, can torture and slay.

What, then, is the object, what the method, of an art, and what the source of its power? The whole secret is that no art does "compete with life." Man's one method, whether he reasons or creates, is to half-shut his eyes against the dazzle and confusion of reality. The arts, like arithmetic and geometry, turn away their eyes from the gross, colored and mobile nature at our feet, and regard instead a certain figmentary abstraction. Geometry will tell us of a circle, a thing never seen in nature; asked about a green circle or an iron circle, it lays its

hand upon its mouth. So with the arts. Painting, ruefully comparing sunshine and flake-white, gives up truth of color, as it had already given up relief and movement; and instead of vying with nature, arranges a scheme of harmonious tints. Literature, above all in its most typical mood, the word of narrative, similarly flees the direct challenge and pursues instead an independent and creative aim. So far as it imitates at all, it imitates not life but speech: not the facts of human destiny, but the emphasis and the suppressions with which the human actor tells of them. The real art that dealt with life directly was that of the first men who told their stories round the savage campfire. Our art is occupied, and bound to be occupied, not so much in making stories true as in making them typical; not so much in capturing the lineaments of each fact, as in marshaling all of them toward a common end. For the welter of impressions, all forcible but all discreet, which life presents, it substitutes a certain artificial series of impressions, all indeed most feebly represented, but all aiming at the same effect, all eloquent of the same idea, all chiming together like consonant notes in music or like the graduated tints in a good picture. From all its chapters, from all its pages, from all its sentences, the well-written novel echoes and reechoes its one creative and controlling thought; to this must every incident and character contribute; the style must have been pitched in unison with this; and if there is anywhere a word that looks another way, the book would be stronger, clearer, and (I had almost said) fuller without it. Life is monstrous, infinite, illogical, abrupt and poignant; a work of art, in comparison, is neat, finite, self-contained, rational, flowing and emasculate. Life imposes by brute energy, like inarticulate thunder; art catches the ear, among the far louder noises of experience, like an air artificially made by a discreet musician. A proposition of geometry does not compete with life; and a proposition of geometry is a fair and luminous parallel for a work of art. Both are reasonable, both untrue to the crude fact; both inhere in nature, neither represents it. The novel, which is a work of art, exists, not by its resem-

blances to life, which are forced and material, as a shoe must still consist of leather, but by its immeasurable difference from life, which is designed and significant, and is both the method and the meaning of the work.

The life of man is not the subject of novels, but the inexhaustible magazine from which subjects are to be selected; the name of these is legion; and with each new subject—for here again I must differ by the whole width of heaven from Mr. James—the true artist will vary his method and change the point of attack. That which was in one case an excellence, will become a defect in another; what was the making of one book, will in the next be impertinent or dull. First each novel, and then each class of novels, exists by and for itself. I will take, for instance, three main classes, which are fairly distinct: first, the novel of adventure, which appeals to certain almost sensual and quite illogical tendencies in man; second, the novel of character, which appeals to our intellectual appreciation of man's foibles and mingled and inconstant motives; and third, the dramatic novel, which deals with the same stuff as the serious theater, and appeals to our emotional nature and moral judgment.

And first for the novel of adventure. Mr. James refers, with singular generosity of praise, to a little book about a quest for hidden treasure; but he lets fall, by the way, some rather startling words. In this book he misses what he calls the "immense luxury" of being able to quarrel with his author. The luxury, to most of us, is to lay by our judgment, to be submerged by the tale as by a billow, and only to awake, and begin to distinguish and find fault, when the piece is over and the volume laid aside. Still more remarkable is Mr. James's reason. He can not criticize the author, as he goes, "because," says he, comparing it with another work, "*I have been a child, but I have never been on a quest for buried treasure.*" Here is, indeed, a wilful paradox; for if he has never been on a quest for buried treasure, it can be demonstrated that he has never been a child. There never was a child (unless Master James) but has hunted gold, and been a pirate, and a military commander, and a bandit of the mountains;

but has fought, and suffered shipwreck and prison, and imbrued its little hands in gore, and gallantly retrieved the lost battle and triumphantly protected innocence and beauty. Elsewhere in his essay Mr. James has protested with excellent reason against too narrow a conception of experience; for the born artist, he contends, the "faintest hints of life" are converted into revelations; and it will be found true, I believe, in a majority of cases, that the artist writes with more gusto and effect of those things which he has only wished to do, than those of which he has done. Desire is a wonderful telescope, and Pisgah the best observatory. Now, while it is true that neither Mr. James nor the author of the work in question has ever, in the fleshly sense, gone questing after gold, it is probable that both have ardently desired and fondly imagined the details of such a life in youthful day-dreams; and the author, counting upon that, and well aware (cunning and low-minded man!) that this class of interest, having been frequently treated, finds a readily accessible and beaten road to the sympathies of the reader, addressed himself throughout to the building up and circumstantiation of this boyish dream. Character to the boy is a sealed book; for him, a pirate is a beard, a pair of wide trousers and a liberal complement of pistols. The author, for the sake of circumstantiation and because he was himself more or less grown up, admitted character, within certain limits, into his design; but only within certain limits. Had the same puppets figured in a scheme of another sort, they had been drawn to a very different purpose; for in this elementary novel of adventure, the characters need to be presented with but one class of qualities—the warlike and formidable. So as they appear insidious in deceit and fatal in the combat, they have served their end. Danger is the matter with which this class of novel deals; fear, the passion with which it idly trifles; and the characters are portrayed only so far as they realize the sense of danger and provoke the sympathy of fear. To add more traits, to be too clever, to start the hare of moral or intellectual interest while we are running the fox of material interest, is not to enrich but to stultify your tale. The stupid

reader will only be offended, and the clever reader lose the scent.

The novel of character has this difference from all others: that it requires no coherency of plot, and for this reason, as in the case of *Gil Blas,* it is sometimes called the novel of adventure. It turns on the humors of the persons represented; these are, to be sure, embodied in incidents, but the incidents themselves, being tributary, need not march in a progression; and the characters may be statically shown. As they enter, so they may go out; they must be consistent, but they need not grow. Here Mr. James will recognize the note of much of his own work; he treats, for the most part, the statics of character, studying it at rest or only gently moved; and, with his usual delicate and just artistic instinct, he avoids those stronger passions which would deform the attributes he loves to study, and change his sitters from the humorists of ordinary life to the brute forces and bare types of more emotional moments. In his recent *Author of Beltraffio,* so just in conception, so nimble and neat in workmanship, strong passion is indeed employed; but observe that it is not displayed. Even in the heroine the working of the passion is suppressed; and the great struggle, the true tragedy, the *scène-à-faire,* passes unseen behind the panels of a locked door. The delectable invention of the young visitor is introduced consciously or not, to this end: that Mr. James, true to his method, might avoid the scene of passion. I trust no reader will suppose me guilty of undervaluing this little masterpiece. I mean merely that it belongs to one marked class of novel, and that it would have been very differently conceived and treated had it belonged to that other marked class, of which I now proceed to speak.

I take pleasure in calling the dramatic novel by that name, because it enables me to point out by the way a strange and peculiarly English misconception. It is sometimes supposed that the drama consists of incident. It consists of passion, which gives the actor his opportunity; and that passion must progressively increase, or the actor, as the piece proceeded, would be unable to carry the audi-

ence from a lower to a higher pitch of interest and emotion. A good serious play must therefore be founded on one of the passionate *cruces* of life, where duty and inclination come nobly to the grapple; and the same is true of what I call, for that reason, the dramatic novel. I will instance a few worthy specimens, all of our own day and language; Meredith's *Rhoda Fleming,* that wonderful and painful book, long out of print,[3] and hunted for at bookstalls like an Aldine; Hardy's *Pair of Blue Eyes;* and two of Charles Reade's, *Griffith Gaunt* and *The Double Marriage,* originally called *White Lies,* and founded (by an accident quaintly favorable to my nomenclature) on a play by Maquet, the partner of the great Dumas. In this kind of novel the closed door of *The Author of Beltraffio* must be broken open; passion must appear upon the scene and utter its last word; passion is the be-all and the end-all, the plot and the solution, the protagonist and the *deus ex machinâ* in one. The characters may come anyhow upon the stage: we do not care; the point is, that, before they leave it, they shall become transfigured and raised out of themselves by passion. It may be part of the design to draw them with detail; to depict a full-length character, and then behold it melt and change in the furnace of emotion. But there is no obligation of the sort; nice portraiture is not required; and we are content to accept mere abstract types, so they be strongly and sincerely moved. A novel of this class may be even great, and yet contain no individual figure; it may be great, because it displays the workings of the perturbed heart and the impersonal utterance of passion; and with an artist of the second class, it is, indeed, even more likely to be great, when the issue has thus been narrowed and the whole force of the writer's mind directed to passion alone. Cleverness again, which has its fair field in the novel of character, is debarred all entry upon this more solemn theater. A far-fetched motive, an ingenious evasion of the issue, a witty instead of a passionate turn, offend us like an insincerity. All should be plain, all straightforward to the end. Hence it is that, in

[3] Now no longer so, thank Heaven!

Rhoda Fleming, Mrs. Lovel raises such resentment in the reader; her motives are too flimsy, her ways are too equivocal, for the weight and strength of her surroundings. Hence the hot indignation of the reader when Balzac, after having begun the *Duchesse de Langeais* in terms of strong if somewhat swollen passion, cuts the knot by the derangement of the hero's clock. Such personages and incidents belong to the novel of character; they are out of place in the high society of the passions; when the passions are introduced in art at their full height, we look to see them, not baffled and impotently striving, as in life, but towering above circumstance and acting substitutes for fate.

And here I can imagine Mr. James, with his lucid sense, to intervene. To much of what I have said he would apparently demur; in much he would, somewhat impatiently, acquiesce. It may be true; but it is not what he desired to say or to hear said. He spoke of the finished picture and its worth when done; I, of the brushes, the palette, and the north light. He uttered his views in the tone and for the ear of good society; I, with the emphasis and technicalities of the obtrusive student. But the point, I may reply, is not merely to amuse the public, but to offer helpful advice to the young writer. And the young writer will not so much be helped by genial pictures of what an art may aspire to at its highest, as by a true idea of what it must be on the lowest terms. The best that we can say to him is this: Let him choose a motive, whether of character or passion; carefully construct his plot so that every incident is an illustration of the motive, and every property employed shall bear to it a near relation of congruity or contrast; avoid a sub-plot, unless, as sometimes in Shakespeare, the sub-plot be a reversion or complement of the main intrigue; suffer not his style to flag below the level of the argument; pitch the key of conversation, not with any thought of how men talk in parlors, but with a single eye to the degree of passion he may be called on to express; and allow neither himself in the narrative nor any character in the course of the dialogue, to utter one sentence that is not part and parcel of the business of the

story or the discussion of the problem involved. Let him not regret if this shortens his book; it will be better so; for to add irrelevant matter is not to lengthen but to bury. Let him not mind if he miss a thousand qualities, so that he keeps unflaggingly in pursuit of the one he has chosen. Let him not care particularly if he miss the tone of conversation, the pungent material detail of the day's manners, the reproduction of the atmosphere and the environment. These elements are not essential: a novel may be excellent, and yet have none of them; a passion or a character is so much the better depicted as it rises clearer from material circumstance. In this age of the particular, let him remember the ages of the abstract, the great books of the past, the brave men that lived before Shakespeare and before Balzac. And as the root of the whole matter, let him bear in mind that his novel is not a transcript of life, to be judged by its exactitude; but a simplification of some side or point of life, to stand or fall by its significant simplicity. For although, in great men, working upon great motives, what we observe and admire is often their complexity, yet underneath appearances the truth remains unchanged: that simplification was their method, and that simplicity is their excellence.

II

Since the above was written another novelist has entered repeatedly the lists of theory: one well worthy of mention, Mr. W. D. Howells; and none ever couched a lance with narrower convictions. His own work and those of his pupils and masters singly occupy his mind; he is the bond-slave, the zealot of his school; he dreams of an advance in art like what there is in science; he thinks of past things as radically dead: he thinks a form can be outlived: a strange immersion in his own history; a strange forgetfulness of the history of the race! Meanwhile, by a glance at his own works (could he see them with the eager eyes of his readers) much of this illusion would be dispelled. For while he holds all the poor little orthodoxies of the

day—no poorer and no smaller than those of yesterday or to-morrow, poor and small, indeed, only so far as they are exclusive—the living quality of much that he has done is of a contrary, I had almost said of a heretical, complexion. A man, as I read him, of an originally strong romantic bent—a certain glow of romance still resides in many of his books, and lends them their distinction. As by accident he runs out and revels in the exceptional; and it is then, as often as not, that his reader rejoices—justly, as I contend. For in all this excessive eagerness to be centrally human, is there not one central human thing that Mr. Howells is too often tempted to neglect: I mean himself? A poet, a finished artist, a man in love with the appearances of life, a cunning reader of the mind, he has other passions and aspirations than those he loves to draw. And why should he suppress himself and do such reverence to the Lemuel Barkers? The obvious is not of necessity the normal; fashion rules and deforms; the majority fall tamely into the contemporary shape, and thus attain, in the eyes of the true observer, only a higher power of insignificance; and the danger is lest, in seeking to draw the normal, a man should draw the null, and write the novel of society instead of the romance of man.

RECORDS OF A FAMILY OF ENGINEERS

INTRODUCTION

THE SURNAME OF STEVENSON

FROM the thirteenth century onwards, the name, under the various disguises of Stevinstoun, Stevensoun, Stevensonne, Stenesone, and Stewinsoune, spread across Scotland from the mouth of the Firth of Forth to the mouth of the Firth of Clyde. Four times at least it occurs as a place-name. There is a parish of Stevenston in Cunningham; a second place of the name in the Barony of Bothwell in Lanark; a third on Lyne, above Drochil Castle; the fourth on the Tyne, near Traprain Law. Stevenson of Stevenson (co. Lanark) swore fealty to Edward I. in 1296, and the last of that family died after the Restoration. Stevensons of Hirdmanshiels, in Midlothian, rode in the Bishops' Raid of Aberlady, served as jurors, stood bail for neighbors—Hunter of Polwood, for instance—and became extinct about the same period, or possibly earlier. A Stevenson of Luthrie and another of Pitroddie make their bows, give their names, and vanish. And by the year 1700 it does not appear that any acre of Scots land was vested in any Stevenson.[1]

Here is, so far, a melancholy picture of backward progress, and a family posting toward extinction. But the law (however administered, and I am bound to aver that, in Scotland, "it couldna weel be waur") acts as a kind of dredge, and with dispassionate impartiality brings up into the light of day, and shows us for a moment, in the jury-box or on the gallows, the creeping things of the past. By these broken glimpses we are able to trace the existence of many other and more inglorious Stevensons, picking a private way through the brawl that makes Scots

[1] An error: Stevensons owned at this date the barony of Dolphingston in Haddingtonshire, Montgrennan in Ayrshire, and several other lesser places.

history. They were members of Parliament for Peebles, Stirling, Pittenweem, Kilrenny, and Inverurie. We find them burgesses of Edinburgh; indwellers in Biggar, Perth, and Dalkeith. Thomas was the forester of Newbattle Park, Gavin was a baker, John a maltman, Francis a chirurgeon, and "Schir William" a priest. In the feuds of Humes and Heatleys, Cunninghams, Montgomeries, Mures, Ogilvies, and Turnbulls, we find them inconspicuously involved, and apparently getting rather better than they gave. Schir William (reverend gentleman) was cruellie slaughtered on the Links of Kincraig in 1532; James ("in the mill-town of Roberton"), murdered in 1590; Archibald ("in Gallowfarren"), killed with shots of pistols and hagbuts in 1608. Three violent deaths in about seventy years, against which we can only put the case of Thomas, servant to Hume of Cowden Knowes, who was arraigned with his two young masters for the death of the Bastard of Mellerstanes in 1569. John ("in Dalkeith") stood sentry without Holyrood while the banded lords were despatching Rizzio within. William, at the ringing of Perth bell, ran before Gowrie House "with ane sword, and, entering to the yearde, saw George Craiggingilt with ane twa-handit sword and utheris nychtbouris; at quilk time James Boig cryit ower ane wynds, 'Awa hame! ye will all be hangit!' "—a piece of advice which William took, and immediately "depairtit." John got a maid with child to him in Biggar, and seemingly deserted her; she was hanged on the Castle Hill for infanticide, June 1614; and Martin, elder in Dalkeith, eternally disgraced the name by signing witness in a witch trial, 1661. These are two of our black sheep.[2] Under the Restoration, one Stevenson was a bailie in Edinburgh, and another the lessee of the Canonmills. There were at the same period two physicians of the name of Edinburgh, one of whom, Dr. Archibald, appears to have been a famous man in his day and generation. The court had continual need of him; it was he who reported, for instance, on the state of Rumbold; and he was for some time in the enjoyment of a pension of a thousand pounds

[2] Pitcairn's *Criminal Trials*, at large.—[R. L. S.]

Scots (about eighty pounds sterling) at a time when five hundred pounds is described as "an opulent future." I do not know if I should be glad or sorry that he failed to keep favor; but on 6th January 1682 (rather a cheerless New Year's present) his pension was expunged.[3] There need be no doubt, at least, of my exultation at the fact that he was knighted and recorded arms. Not quite so genteel, but still in public life, Hugh was Under-Clerk to the Privy Council, and liked being so extremely. I gather this from his conduct in September, 1681, when, with all the lords and their servants, he took the woful and soul-destroying Test, swearing it "word by word upon his knees." And, behold! it was in vain, for Hugh was turned out of his small post in 1684.[4] Sir Archibald and Hugh were both plainly inclined to be trimmers; but there was one witness of the name of Stevenson who held high the banner of the Covenant—John, "Land-Laborer[5] in the Parish of Daily, in Carrick," that "eminently pious man." He seems to have been a poor sickly soul, and shows himself disabled with scrofula, and prostrate and groaning aloud with fever; but the enthusiasm of the martyr burned high within him.

"I was made to take joyfully the spoiling of my goods, and with pleasure for His name's sake wandered in deserts and in mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. I lay four months in the coldest season of the year in a hay-stack in my father's garden, and a whole February in the open fields not far from Camragen, and this I did without the least prejudice from the night air; one night, when lying in the fields near to the Carrick-Miln, I was all covered with snow in the morning. Many nights have I lain with pleasure in the churchyard of Old Daily, and made a grave my pillow; frequently have I resorted to the old walls about the glen, near to Camragen, and there sweetly rested." The visible hand of God protected and directed him. Dragoons were turned aside from the bramble-bush where he lay hidden. Miracles were performed for his behoof. "I got a horse and a woman to carry the

[3] Fountainhall's *Decisions*, vol. i. pp. 56, 132, 186, 204, 368.—[R. L. S.]
[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 158, 299.—[R. L. S.]
[5] Working farmer: Fr. *laboureur*.

child, and came to the same mountain, where I wandered by the mist before; it is commonly known by the name of Kells-rhins: when we came to go up the mountain, there came on a great rain, which we thought was the occasion of the child's weeping, and she wept so bitterly, that all we could do could not divert her from it, so that she was ready to burst. When we got to the top of the mountain, where the Lord had been formerly kind to my soul in prayer, I looked round me for a stone, and espying one, I went and brought it. When the woman with me saw me set down the stone, she smiled, and asked what I was going to do with it. I told her I was going to set it up as my Ebenezer, because hitherto, and in that place, the Lord had formerly helped, and I hoped would yet help. The rain still continuing, the child weeping bitterly, I went to prayer, and no sooner did I cry to God, but the child gave over weeping, and when we got up from prayer, the rain was pouring down on every side, but in the way where we were to go there fell not one drop; the place not rained on was as big as an ordinary avenue." And so great a saint was the natural butt of Satan's persecutions. "I retired to the fields for secret prayer about midnight. When I went to pray I was much straitened, and could not get one request, but 'Lord pity,' 'Lord help'; this I came over frequently; at length the terror of Satan fell on me in a high degree, and all I could say even then was—'Lord help.' I continued in the duty for some time, notwithstanding of this terror. At length I got up to my feet, and the terror still increased; then the enemy took me by the arm-pits, and seemed to lift me up by my arms. I saw a loch just before me, and concluded he designed to throw me there by force; and had he got leave to do so, it might have brought a great reproach upon religion."[6] But it was otherwise ordered, and the cause of piety escaped that danger.[7]

[6] This John Stevenson was not the only "witness" of the name; other Stevensons were actually killed during the persecutions, in the Glen of Trool, on Pentland, etc.; and it is very possible that the author's own ancestry was one of the mounted party embodied by Muir of Caldwell, only a day too late for Pentland.

[7] Wodrow Society's *Select Biographies,* vol. ii.—[R. L. S.]

On the whole, the Stevensons may be described as decent reputable folk, following honest trades—millers, maltsters, and doctors, playing the character parts in the Waverley Novels with propriety, if without distinction; and to an orphan looking about him in the world for a potential ancestry, offering a plain and quite unadorned refuge, equally free from shame and glory, John, the land-laborer, is the one living and memorable figure, and he, alas! can not possibly be more near than a collateral. It was on August 12, 1678, that he heard Mr. John Welsh on the Craigdowhill, and "took the heavens, earth, and sun in the firmament that was shining on us, as also the ambassador who made the offer, and *the clerk who raised the psalms,* to witness that I did give myself away to the Lord in a personal and perpetual covenant never to be forgotten"; and already, in 1675, the birth of my direct ascendent was registered in Glasgow. So that I have been pursuing ancestors too far down; and John the land-laborer is debarred me, and I must relinquish from the trophies of my house his *rare soul-strengthening and comforting cordial.* It is the same case with the Edinburgh bailie and the miller of the Canonmills, worthy man! and with that public character, Hugh the Under-Clerk, and more than all, with Sir Archibald, the physician, who recorded arms. And I am reduced to a family of inconspicuous malsters in what was then the clean and handsome little city on the Clyde.

The name has a certain air of being Norse. But the story of Scottish nomenclature is confounded by a continual process of translation and half-translation from the Gaelic which in olden days may have been sometimes reversed. Roy becomes Reid; Gow, Smith. A great Highland clan uses the name of Robertson; a sept in Appin that of Livingstone; Maclean in Glencoe answers to Johnstone at Lockerby. And we find such hybrids as Macalexander for Macallister. There is but one rule to be deduced; that however uncompromisingly Saxon a name may appear, you can never be sure it does not designate a Celt. My great-grandfather wrote the name *Stevenson* but pronounced it *Steenson,* after the fashion

of the immortal minstrel in *Redgauntlet;* and this elision of a medial consonant appears a Gaelic process; and, curiously enough, I have come across no less than two Gaelic forms: *John Macstophane cordinerius in Crossraguel,* 1573, and *William M'Steen* in Dunskeith (co. Ross), 1605.

Stevenson, Steenson, Macstophane, M'Steen: which is the original? which the translation? Or were these separate creations of the patronymic, some English, some Gaelic? The curiously compact territory in which we find them seated—Ayr, Lanark, Peebles, Stirling, Perth, Fife, and the Lothians, would seem to forbid the supposition.[8]

"Stevenson—or according to tradition of one of the proscribed of the clan Macgregor, who was born among the willows or in a hillside sheep-pen—'Son of my love,' a heraldic bar sinister, but history reveals a reason for the birth among the willows far other than the sinister aspect of the name:" these are the dark words of Mr. Cosmo Innes; but history or tradition, being interrogated, tells a somewhat tangled tale. The heir of Macgregor of Glenorchy, murdered about 1353 by the Argyll Campbells, appears to have been the original "Son of my love"; and his more loyal clansmen took the name to fight under. It may be supposed the story of their resistance became popular, and the name in some sort identified with the idea of opposition to the Campbells. Twice afterward, on some renewed aggression, in 1502 and 1552, we find the Macgregors again banding themselves into a sept of "Sons of my love"; and when the great disaster fell on them in 1603, the whole original legend reappears, and we have the heir of Alaster of Glenstrae born "among the willows" of a fugitive mother, and the more loyal clansmen again rallying under the name of Stevenson. A story would not be told so often unless it had some base in fact; nor (if there were no bond at all between the Red Macgregors and the Stevensons) would that extraneous and somewhat

[8] Though the districts here named are those in which the name of Stevenson is most common, it is in point of fact far more widespread than the text indicates, and occurs from Dumfries and Berwickshire to Aberdeen and Orkney.

uncouth name be so much repeated in the legends of the Children of the Mist.

But I am enabled, by my very lively and obliging correspondent, Mr. George A. Mecgregor Stevenson of New York, to give an actual instance. His grandfather, great-grandfather, great-great-grandfather, and great-great-great-grandfather, all used the names of Macgregor and Stevenson as occasion served; being perhaps Macgregor by night and Stevenson by day. The great-great-great-grandfather was a mighty man of his hands, marched with the clan in the Forty-five, and returned with *spolia opima* in the shape of a sword, which he had wrested from an officer in the retreat, and which is in the possession of my correspondent to this day. His great-grandson (the grandfather of my correspondent), being converted to Methodism by some wayside preacher, discarded in a moment his name, his old nature, and his political principles, and with the zeal of a proselyte sealed his adherence to the Protestant Succession by baptizing his next son George. This George became the publisher and editor of the *Wesleyan Times*. His children were brought up in ignorance of their Highland pedigree; and my correspondent was puzzled to overhear his father speak of him as a true Macgregor, and amazed to find, in rummaging about that peaceful and pious house, the sword of the Hanoverian officer. After he was grown up and was better informed of his descent, "I frequently asked my father," he writes, "why he did not use the name of Macgregor; his replies were significant, and give a picture of the man: 'It isn't a good *Methodist* name. *You* can use it, but it will do you no *good*.' Yet the old gentleman, by way of pleasantry, used to announce himself to friends as 'Colonel Macgregor.' "

Here, then, are certain Macgregors habitually using the name of Stevenson, and at last, under the influence of Methodism, adopting it entirely. Doubtless a proscribed clan could not be particular; they took a name as a man takes an umbrella against a shower; as Rob Roy took Campbell, and his son took Drummond. But this case is different; Stevenson was not taken and left—it was con-

sistently adhered to. It does not in the least follow that all Stevensons are of the clan Alpin; but it does follow that some may be. And I can not conceal from myself the possibility that James Stevenson in Glasgow, my first authentic ancestor, may have had a Highland *alias* upon his conscience and a claymore in his back parlor.

To one more tradition I may allude, that we are somehow descended from a French barber-surgeon who came to St. Andrews in the service of one of the Cardinal Beatons. No details were added. But the very name of France was so detested in my family for three generations, that I am tempted to suppose there may be something in it.[9]

[9] Mr. J. H. Stevenson is satisfied that these speculations as to a possible Norse, Highland, or French origin are vain. All we know about the engineer family is that it was sprung from a stock of Westland Whigs settled in the latter part of the seventeenth century in the parish of Neilston, as mentioned at the beginning of the next chapter. It may be noted that the Ayrshire parish of Stevenston, the lands of which are said to have received the name in the twelfth century, lies within thirteen miles southwest of this place. The lands of Stevenson in Lanarkshire, first mentioned in the next century, in the Ragman Roll, lie within twenty miles east.

RECORDS OF A FAMILY OF ENGINEERS

CHAPTER I

DOMESTIC ANNALS

IT is believed that in 1665, James Stevenson in Nether Carsewell, parish of Neilston, County of Renfrew, and presumably a tenant farmer, married one Jean Keir; and in 1675, without doubt, there was born to these two a son Robert, possibly a maltster in Glasgow. In 1710, Robert married, for a second time, Elizabeth Cumming, and there was born to them, in 1720, another Robert, certainly a maltster in Glasgow. In 1742, Robert the second married Margaret Fulton (Margret, she called herself), by whom he had ten children, among whom were Hugh, born February, 1749, and Alan, born June, 1752.

With these two brothers my story begins. Their deaths were simultaneous; their lives unusually brief and full. Tradition whispered me in childhood they were the owners of an islet near St. Kitts; and it is certain they had risen to be at the head of considerable interests in the West Indies, which Hugh managed abroad and Alan at home, at an age when others are still curveting a clerk's stool. My kinsman, Mr. Stevenson of Stirling, has heard his father mention that there had been "something romantic" about Alan's marriage: and, alas! he has forgotten what. It was early at least. His wife was Jean, daughter of David Lillie, a builder in Glasgow, and several times "Deacon of the Wrights": the date of the marriage has not reached me: but on 8th June 1772, when Robert, the only child of the union, was born, the husband and father had scarce passed, or had not yet attained, his twentieth

year. Here was a youth making haste to give hostages to fortune. But this early scene of prosperity in love and business was on the point of closing.

There hung in the house of this young family, and successively in those of my grandfather and father, an oil painting of a ship of many tons burden. Doubtless the brothers had an interest in the vessel; I was told she had belonged to them outright; and the picture was preserved through years of hardship, and remains to this day in the possession of the family, the only memorial of my great-grandsire Alan. It was on this ship that he sailed on his last adventure, summoned to the West Indies by Hugh. An agent had proved unfaithful on a serious scale; and it used to be told me in my childhood how the brothers pursued him from one island to another in an open boat, were exposed to the pernicious dews of the tropics, and simultaneously struck down. The dates and places of their deaths (now before me) would seem to indicate a more scattered and prolonged pursuit: Hugh, on the 16th April 1774, in Tobago, within sight of Trinidad; Alan, so late as May 26th, and so far away as "Santt Kittes," in the Leeward Islands—both, says the family Bible, "of a fiver" (!). The death of Hugh was probably announced by Alan in a letter, to which we may refer the details of the open boat and the dew. Thus, at least, in something like the course of post, both were called away, the one twenty-five, the other twenty-two; their brief generation became extinct, their short-lived house fell with them; and "in these lawless parts and lawless times"—the words are my grandfather's—their property was stolen or became involved. Many years later, I understand some small recovery to have been made; but at the moment almost the whole means of the family seem to have perished with the young merchants. On the 27th April, eleven days after Hugh Stevenson, twenty-nine before Alan, died David Lillie, the deacon of the wrights; so that mother and son were orphaned in one month. Thus, from a few scraps of paper bearing little beyond dates, we construct the outlines of the tragedy that shadowed the cradle of Robert Stevenson.

Jean Lillie was a young woman of strong sense, well fitted to contend with poverty, and of a pious disposition, which it is like that these misfortunes heated. Like so many other widowed Scotswomen, she vowed her son would wag his head in a pulpit; but her means were inadequate to her ambition. A charity school, and some time under a Mr. M'Intyre, "a famous linguist," were all she could afford in the way of education to the would-be minister. He learned no Greek; in one place he mentions that the Orations of Cicero were his highest book in Latin; in another that he had "delighted" in Virgil and Horace; but his delight could never have been scholarly. This appears to have been the whole of his training previous to an event which changed his own destiny and molded that of his descendants—the second marriage of his mother.

There was a Merchant-Burgess of Edinburgh of the name of Thomas Smith. The Smith pedigree has been traced a little more particularly than the Stevensons', with a similar dearth of illustrious names. One character seems to have appeared, indeed, for a moment at the wings of history: a skipper of Dundee who smuggled over some Jacobite big-wig at the time of the Fifteen, and was afterward drowned in Dundee harbor while going on board his ship. With this exception, the generations of the Smiths present no conceivable interest even to a descendant; and Thomas, of Edinburgh, was the first to issue from respectable obscurity. His father, a skipper out of Broughty Ferry, was drowned at sea while Thomas was still young. He seems to have owned a ship or two—whalers, I suppose, or coasters—and to have been a member of the Dundee Trinity House, whatever that implies. On his death the widow remained in Broughty, and the son came to push his future in Edinburgh. There is a story told of him in the family which I repeat here because I shall have to tell later on a similar, but more perfectly authenticated, experience of his stepson, Robert Stevenson. Word reached Thomas that his mother was unwell, and he prepared to leave for Broughty on the morrow. It was between two and three in the morning, and the early northern daylight was already clear, when

he awoke and beheld the curtains at the bedfoot drawn aside and his mother appear in the interval, smile upon him for a moment, and then vanish. The sequel is stereotype: he took the time by his watch, and arrived at Broughty to learn it was the very moment of her death. The incident is at least curious in having happened to such a person—as the tale is being told of him. In all else, he appears as a man, ardent, passionate, practical, designed for affairs and prospering in them far beyond the average. He founded a solid business in lamps and oils, and was the sole proprietor of a concern called the Greenside Company's Works—"a multifarious concern it was," writes my cousin, Professor Swan, "of tinsmiths, coppersmiths, brassfounders, blacksmiths and japanners." He was also, it seems, a shipowner and underwriter. He built himself "a land"—Nos. 1 and 2 Baxter's Place, then no such unfashionable neighborhood—and died, leaving his only son in easy circumstances, and giving to his three surviving daughters portions of five thousand pounds and upward. There is no standard of success in life; but in one of its meanings, this is to succeed.

In what we know of his opinions, he makes a figure highly characteristic of the time. A high Tory and patriot, a captain—so I find it in my notes—of Edinburgh Spearmen, and on duty in the Castle during the Muir and Palmer troubles, he bequeathed to his descendants a bloodless sword and a somewhat violent tradition, both long preserved. The judge who sat on Muir and Palmer, the famous Braxfield, let fall from the bench the *obiter dictum*—"I never liked the French all my days, but now I hate them." If Thomas Smith, the Edinburgh Spearman, were in court, he must have been tempted to applaud. The people of that land were his abhorrence; he loathed Buonaparte like Antichrist. Toward the end he fell into a kind of dotage; his family must entertain him with games of tin soldiers, which he took a childish pleasure to array and overset; but those who played with him must be upon their guard, for if his side, which was always that of the English against the French, should chance to be defeated, there would be trouble in Baxter's

Place. For these opinions he may almost be said to have suffered. Baptized and brought up in the Church of Scotland, he had, upon some conscientious scruple, joined the communion of the Baptists. Like other Nonconformists, these were inclined to the liberal side in politics, and, at least in the beginning, regarded Buonaparte as a deliverer. From the time of his joining the Spearmen, Thomas Smith became in consequence a bugbear to his brethren in the faith. "They that take the sword shall perish with the sword," they told him; they gave him "no rest"; "his position became intolerable"; it was plain he must choose between his political and his religious tenets; and in the last years of his life, about 1812, he returned to the Church of his fathers.

August 1786 was the date of his chief advancement, when, having designed a system of oil lights to take the place of the primitive coal fires before in use, he was dubbed engineer to the newly-formed Board of Northern Lighthouses. Not only were his fortunes bettered by the appointment, but he was introduced to a new and wider field for the exercise of his abilities, and a new way of life highly agreeable to his active constitution. He seems to have rejoiced in the long journeys, and to have combined them with the practise of field sports. "A tall, stout man coming ashore with his gun over his arm"—so he was described to my father—the only description that has come down to me—by a lightkeeper old in the service. Nor did this change come alone.

On the 9th of July of the same year, Thomas Smith had been left for the second time a widower. As he was still but thirty-three years old, prospering in his affairs, newly advanced in the world, and encumbered at the time with a family of children, five in number, it was natural that he should entertain the notion of another wife. Expeditious in business, he was no less so in his choice; and it was not later than June, 1787—for my grandfather is described as still in his fifteenth year—that he married the widow of Alan Stevenson.

The perilous experiment of bringing together two families for once succeeded. Mr. Smith's two eldest daugh-

ters, Jean and Janet, fervent in piety, unwearied in kind deeds, were well qualified both to appreciate and to attract the stepmother; and her son, on the other hand, seems to have found immediate favor in the eyes of Mr. Smith. It is, perhaps, easy to exaggerate the ready-made resemblances; the tired woman must have done much to fashion girls who were under ten; the man, lusty and opinionated, must have stamped a strong impression on the boy of fifteen. But the cleavage of the family was too marked, the identity of character and interest produced between the two men on the one hand, and the three women on the other, was too complete to have been the result of influence alone. Particular bonds of union must have preexisted on each side. And there is no doubt that the man and the boy met with common ambitions, and a common bent, to the practise of that which had not so long before acquired the name of civil engineering.

For the profession which is now so thronged, famous, and influential, was then a thing of yesterday. My grandfather had an anecdote of Smeaton, probably learned from John Clerk of Eldin, their common friend. Smeaton was asked by the Duke of Argyll to visit the West Highland coast for a professional purpose. He refused, appalled, it seems, by the rough traveling. "You can recommend some other fit person?" asked the Duke. "No," said Smeaton, "I am sorry I can't." "What!" cried the Duke, "a profession with only one man in it! Pray, who taught you?" "Why," said Smeaton, "I believe I may say I was self-taught, an 't please your grace." Smeaton, at the date of Thomas Smith's third marriage, was yet living; and as the one had grown to the new profession from his place at the Instrument-maker's, the other was beginning to enter it by the way of his trade. The engineer of to-day is confronted with a library of acquired results; tables and formulas to the value of folios full have been calculated and recorded; and the student finds everywhere in front of him the footprints of the pioneers. In the eighteenth century the field was largely unexplored; the engineer must read with his own eyes the face of nature; he arose a volunteer, from the workshop

or the mill, to undertake works which were at once inventions and adventures. It was not a science then—it was a living art; and it visibly grew under the eyes and between the hands of its practitioners.

The charm of such an occupation was strongly felt by stepfather and stepson. It chanced that Thomas Smith was a reformer; the superiority of his proposed lamp and reflectors over open fires of coal secured his appointment; and no sooner had he set his hand to the task than the interest of that employment mastered him. The vacant stage on which he was to act, and where all had yet to be created—the greatness of the difficulties, the smallness of the means intrusted him—would rouse a man of his disposition like a call to battle. The lad introduced by marriage under his roof was of a character to sympathize; the public usefulness of the service would appeal to his judgment, the perpetual need for fresh expedients stimulate his ingenuity. And there was another attraction which, in the younger man at least, appealed to, and perhaps first aroused a profound and enduring sentiment of romance: I mean the attraction of the life. The seas into which his labors carried the new engineer were still scarce charted, the coasts still dark; his way on shore was often far beyond the convenience of any road; the isles in which he must sojourn were still partly savage. He must toss much in boats; he must often adventure on horseback by the dubious bridle-track through unfrequented wildernesses; he must sometimes plant his lighthouse in the very camp of wreckers; and he was continually enforced to the vicissitudes of outdoor life. The joy of my grandfather in this career was strong as the love of woman. It lasted him through youth and manhood, it burned strong in age, and at the approach of death his last yearning was to renew these loved experiences. What he felt himself he continued to attribute to all around him. And to this supposed sentiment in others I find him continually, almost pathetically, appealing: often in vain.

Snared by these interests, the boy seems to have become almost at once the eager confidant and adviser of his new connection; the Church, if he had ever entertained the

prospect very warmly, faded from his view; and at the age of nineteen I find him already in a post with some authority, superintending the construction of the lighthouse on the isle of Little Cumbrae, in the Firth of Clyde. The change of aim seems to have caused or been accompanied by a change of character. It sounds absurd to couple the name of my grandfather with the word indolence: but the lad who had been destined from the cradle to the Church, and who had attained the age of fifteen without acquiring more than a moderate knowledge of Latin, was at least no unusual student. And from the day of his charge at Little Cumbrae he steps before us what he remained until the end, a man of the most zealous industry, greedy of occupation, greedy of knowledge, a stern husband of time, a reader, a writer, unflagging in his task of self-improvement. Thenceforward his summers were spent directing works and ruling workmen, now in uninhabited, now in half-savage islands; his winters were set apart, first at the Andersonian Institution, then at the University of Edinburgh, to improve himself in mathematics, chemistry, natural history, agriculture, moral philosophy, and logic; a bearded student—although no doubt scrupulously shaved. I find one reference to his years in class which will have a meaning for all who have studied in Scottish universities. He mentions a recommendation made by the professor of logic. "The high-school men," he writes, "and *bearded men like myself,* were all attention." If my grandfather were throughout life a thought too studious of the art of getting on, much must be forgiven to the bearded and belated student who looked across, with a sense of difference, at "the high-school men." Here was a gulf to be crossed; but already he could feel that he had made a beginning, and that must have been a proud hour when he devoted his earliest earnings to the repayment of the charitable foundation in which he had received the rudiments of knowledge.

In yet another way he followed the example of his father-in-law, and from 1794 till 1807, when the affairs of the Bell Rock made it necessary for him to resign, he served in different corps of volunteers. In the last of

these he rose to a position of distinction, no less than captain of the Grenadier Company, and his colonel, in accepting his resignation, entreated he would do them "the favor of continuing as an honorary member of a corps which has been so much indebted for your zeal and exertions."

To very pious women the men of the house are apt to appear worldly. The wife, as she puts on her new bonnet before church, is apt to sigh over that assiduity which enabled her husband to pay the milliner's bill. And in the household of the Smiths and Stevensons the women were not only extremely pious, but the men were in reality a trifle worldly. Religious they both were; conscious, like all Scots, of the fragility and unreality of that scene in which we play our uncomprehended parts; like all Scots, realizing daily and hourly the sense of another will than ours and a perpetual direction in the affairs of life. But the current of their endeavors flowed in a more obvious channel. They had got on so far; to get on further was their next ambition—to gather wealth, to rise in society, to leave their descendants higher than themselves, to be (in some sense) among the founders of families. Scott was in the same town nourishing similar dreams. But in the eyes of the women these dreams would be foolish and idolatrous.

I have before me some volumes of old letters addressed to Mrs. Smith and the two girls, her favorites, which depict in a strong light their characters and the society in which they moved.

"My very dear and much esteemed Friend," writes one correspondent, "this day being the anniversary of our acquaintance, I feel inclined to address you; but where shall I find words to express the feelings of a graitful *Heart*, first to the Lord who graciously inclined you on this day last year to notice an afflicted Strainger providentially cast in your way far from any Earthly friend? . . . Methinks I shall hear him say unto you, 'Inasmuch as ye shewed kindness to my afflicted handmaiden, ye did it unto me.'"

This is to Jean; but the same afflicted lady wrote indifferently to Jean, to Janet, and to Mrs. Smith, whom she calls "my Edinburgh mother." It is plain the three were

as one person, moving to acts of kindness, like the Graces, inarmed. Too much stress must not be laid on the style of this correspondence: Clarinda survived, not far away, and may have met the ladies on the Calton Hill; and many of the writers appear, underneath the conventions of the period, to be genuinely moved. But what unpleasantly strikes a reader is that these devout unfortunates found a revenue in their devotion. It is everywhere the same tale: on the side of the soft-hearted ladies, substantial acts of help; on the side of the correspondents, affection, italics, texts, ecstasies, and imperfect spelling. When a midwife is recommended, not at all for proficiency in her important art, but because she has "a sister whom I [the correspondent] esteem and respect, and [who] is a spiritual daughter of my Hon^{d} Father in the Gosple," the mask seems to be torn off, and the wages of godliness appear too openly. Capacity is a secondary matter in a midwife, temper in a servant, affection in a daughter, and the repetition of a shibboleth fulfils the law. Common decency is at times forgot in the same page with the most sanctified advice and aspiration. Thus I am introduced to a correspondent who appears to have been at the time the housekeeper at Invermay, and who writes to condole with my grandmother in a season of distress. For nearly half a sheet she keeps to the point with an excellent discretion in language; then suddenly breaks out:

"It was fully my intention to have left this at Martinmass, but the Lord fixes the bounds of our habitation. I have had more need of patience in my situation here than in any other, partly from the very violent, unsteady, deceitful temper of the Mistress of the Family, and also from the state of the house. It was in a train of repair when I came here two years ago, and is still in Confusion. There is above six Thousand Pounds' worth of Furniture come from London to be put up when the rooms are completely finished; and then, woe be to the Person who is Housekeeper at Invermay!"

And by the tail of the document, which is torn, I see she goes on to ask the bereaved family to seek her a new place. It is extraordinary that people should have been so deceived in so careless an impostor; that a few sprinkled "God willings" should have blinded them to the essence

of this venomous letter; and that they should have been at the pains to bind it in with others (many of them highly touching) in their memorial of harrowing days. But the good ladies were without guile and without suspicion; they were victims marked for the ax, and the religious impostors snuffed up the wind as they drew near.

I have referred above to my grandmother; it was no slip of the pen: for by an extraordinary arrangement, in which it is hard not to suspect the managing hand of a mother, Jean Smith became the wife of Robert Stevenson. Mrs. Smith had failed in her design to make her son a minister, and she saw him daily more immersed in business and worldly ambition. One thing remained that she might do: she might secure for him a godly wife, that great means of sanctification; and she had two under her hand, trained by herself, her dear friends and daughters both in law and love—Jean and Janet. Jean's complexion was extremely pale, Janet's was florid; my grandmother's nose was straight, my great-aunt's aquiline; but by the sound of the voice, not even a son was able to distinguish one from another. The marriage of a man of twenty-seven and a girl of twenty who have lived for twelve years as brother and sister, is difficult to conceive. It took place, however, and thus in 1799 the family was still further cemented by the union of a representative of the male or worldly element with one of the female and devout.

This essential difference remained unbridged, yet never diminished the strength of their relation. My grandfather pursued his design of advancing in the world with some measure of success; rose to distinction in his calling, grew to be the familiar of members of Parliament, judges of the Court of Session, and "landed gentlemen"; learned a ready address, had a flow of interesting conversation, and when he was referred to as "a highly respectable *bourgeois*," resented the description. My grandmother remained to the end devout and unambitious, occupied with her Bible, her children, and her house; easily shocked, and associating largely with a clique of godly parasites. I do not know if she called in the midwife already referred to; but the principle on which that lady was recommended, she

accepted fully. The cook was a godly woman, the butcher a Christian man, and the table suffered. The scene has been often described to me of my grandfather sawing with darkened countenance at some indissoluble joint—"Preserve me, my dear, what kind of a reedy, stringy beast is this?"—of the joint removed, the pudding substituted and uncovered; and of my grandmother's anxious glance and hasty, deprecatory comment, "Just mismanaged!" Yet with the invincible obstinacy of soft natures, she would adhere to the godly woman and the Christian man, or find others of the same kidney to replace them. One of her confidantes had once a narrow escape; an unwieldy old woman, she had fallen from an outside stair in a close of the Old Town; and my grandmother rejoiced to communicate the providential circumstance that a baker had been passing underneath with his bread upon his head. "I would like to know what kind of providence the baker thought it!" cried my grandfather.

But the sally must have been unique. In all else that I have heard or read of him, so far from criticizing, he was doing his utmost to honor and even to emulate his wife's pronounced opinions. In the only letter which has come to my hand of Thomas Smith's, I find him informing his wife that he was "in time for afternoon church"; similar assurances or cognate excuses abound in the correspondence of Robert Stevenson; and it is comical and pretty to see the two generations paying the same court to a female piety more highly strung: Thomas Smith to the mother of Robert Stevenson—Robert Stevenson to the daughter of Thomas Smith. And if for once my grandfather suffered himself to be hurried, by his sense of humor and justice, into that remark about the case of Providence and the Baker, I should be sorry for any of his children who should have stumbled into the same attitude of criticism. In the apocalyptic style of the housekeeper of Invermay, wo be to that person! But there was no fear; husband and sons all entertained for the pious, tender soul the same chivalrous and moved affection. I have spoken with one who remembered her, and who had been the intimate and equal of her sons, and I found

this witness had been struck, as I had been, with a sense of disproportion between the warmth of the adoration felt and the nature of the woman, whether as described or observed. She diligently read and marked her Bible; she was a tender nurse; she had a sense of humor under strong control; she talked and found some amusement at her (or rather at her husband's) dinner-parties. It is conceivable that even my grandmother was amenable to the seductions of dress; at least I find her husband inquiring anxiously about "the gowns from Glasgow," and very careful to describe the toilet of the Princess Charlotte, whom he had seen in church "in a Pelisse and Bonnet of the same color of cloth as the Boys' Dress jackets, trimmed with blue satin ribbons; the hat or Bonnet, Mr. Spittal said, was a Parisian slouch, and had a plume of three white feathers." But all this leaves a blank impression, and it is rather by reading backward in these old musty letters, which have moved me now to laughter and now to impatience, that I glean occasional glimpses of how she seemed to her contemporaries and trace (at work in her queer world of godly and grateful parasites) a mobile and responsive nature. Fashion molds us, and particularly women, deeper than we sometimes think; but a little while ago, and, in some circles, women stood or fell by the degree of their appreciation of old pictures; in the early years of the century (and surely with more reason) a character like that of my grandmother warmed, charmed, and subdued, like a strain of music, the hearts of the men of her own household. And there is little doubt that Mrs. Smith, as she looked on at the domestic life of her son and her stepdaughter, and numbered the heads in their increasing nursery, must have breathed fervent thanks to her Creator.

Yet this was to be a family unusually tried; it was not for nothing that one of the godly women saluted Miss Janet Smith as "a veteran in affliction"; and they were all before middle life experienced in that form of service. By the 1st of January, 1808, besides a pair of still-born twins, five children had been born and still survived to the young couple. By the 11th two were gone; by the 28th a third had followed, and the two others were still in danger. In

the letters of a former nurserymaid—I give her name, Jean Mitchell, *honoris causa*—we are enabled to feel, even at this distance of time, some of the bitterness of that month of bereavement.

"I have this day received," she writes to Miss Janet, "the melancholy news of my dear babys' deaths. My heart is like to break for my dear Mrs. Stevenson. O may she be supported on this trying occasion! I hope her other three babys will be spared to her. O, Miss Smith, did I think when I parted from my sweet babys that I never was to see them more?" "I received," she begins her next, "the mournful news of my dear Jessie's death. I also received the hair of my three sweet babys, which I will preserve as dear to their memories and as a token of Mr. and Mrs. Stevenson's friendship and esteem. At my leisure hours, when the children are in bed, they occupy all my thoughts. I dream of them. About two weeks ago, I dreamed that my sweet little Jessie came running to me in her usual way, and I took her in my arms. O my dear babys, were mortal eyes permitted to see them in heaven, we would not repine nor grieve for their loss."

By the 29th of February, the Reverend John Campbell, a man of obvious sense and human value, but hateful to the present biographer, because he wrote so many letters and conveyed so little information, summed up this first period of affliction in a letter to Miss Smith: "Your dear sister but a little while ago had a full nursery, and the dear blooming creatures sitting around her table filled her breast with hope that one day they should fill active stations in society and become an ornament in the Church below. But ah!"

Near a hundred years ago these little creatures ceased to be, and for not much less a period the tears have been dried. And to this day, looking in these stitched sheaves of letters, we hear the sound of many soft-hearted women sobbing for the lost. Never was such a massacre of the innocents; teething and chincough and scarlet fever and smallpox ran the round; and little Lillies, and Smiths, and Stevensons fell like moths about a candle; and nearly all the sympathetic correspondents deplore and recall the little losses of their own. "It is impossible to describe the Heavnly looks of the Dear Babe the three last days of his life," writes Mrs. Laurie to Mrs. Smith. "Never—never, my dear aunt, could I wish to eface the remember-

ance of this Dear Child. Never, never, my dear aunt!" And so soon the memory of the dead and the dust of the survivors are buried in one grave.

There was another death in 1812; it passes almost unremarked; a single funeral seemed but a small event to these "veterans in affliction"; and by 1816 the nursery was full again. Seven little hopefuls enlivened the house; some were growing up; to the elder girl my grandfather already wrote notes in current hand at the tail of his letters to his wife; and to the elder boys he had begun to print, with laborious care, sheets of childish gossip and pedantic applications. Here, for instance, under date of May 26th, 1816, is part of a mythological account of London, with a moral for the three gentlemen, "Messieurs Alan, Robert, and James Stevenson," to whom the document is addressed:

"There are many prisons here like Bridewell, for, like other large towns, there are many bad men here as well as many good men. The natives of London are in general not so tall and strong as the people of Edinburgh, because they have not so much pure air, and instead of taking porridge they eat cakes made with sugar and plums. Here you have thousands of carts to draw timber, thousands of coaches to take you to all parts of the town, and thousands of boats to sail on the river Thames. But you must have money to pay, otherwise you can get nothing. Now the way to get money is, become clever men and men of education, by being good scholars."

From the same absence, he writes to his wife on a Sunday:

"It is now about eight o'clock with me, and I imagine you to be busy with the young folks, hearing the questions [*Anglicé*, catechism], and indulging the boys with a chapter from the large Bible, with their interrogations and your answers in the soundest doctrine. I hope James is getting his verse as usual, and that Mary is not forgetting her little *hymn*. While Jeannie will be reading Wotherspoon, or some other suitable and instructive book, I presume our friend, Aunt Mary, will have just arrived with the news of a *throng kirk* [a crowded church] and a great sermon. You may mention, with my compliments to my mother, that I was at St. Paul's to-day, and attended a very excellent service with Mr. James Lawrie. The text was 'Examine and see that ye be in the faith.'"

A twinkle of humor lights up this evocation of the distant scene—the humor of happy men and happy homes. Yet it is penned upon the threshold of fresh sorrow. James and Mary—he of the verse and she of the hymn—did not much more than survive to welcome their returning father. On the 25th, one of the godly women writes to Janet:

"My dearest beloved madam, when I last parted from you, you was so affected with your affliction [you? or I?] could think of nothing else. But on Saturday, when I went to inquire after your health, how was I startled to hear that dear James was gone! Ah, what is this? My dear benefactors, doing so much good to many, to the Lord, suddenly to be deprived of their most valued comforts! I was thrown into great perplexity, could do nothing but murmur, why these things were done to such a family. I could not rest, but at midnight, whether spoken [or not] it was presented to my mind—'Those whom ye deplore are walking with me in white.' I conclude from this the Lord saying to sweet Mrs. Stevenson: 'I gave them to be brought up for me: well done, good and faithful! they are fully prepared, and now I must present them to my father and your father, to my God and your God.'"

It would be hard to lay on flattery with a more sure and daring hand. I quote it as a model of a letter of condolence; be sure it would console. Very different, perhaps quite as welcome, is this from a lighthouse inspector to my grandfather:

"In reading your letter the trickling tear ran down my cheeks in silent sorrow for your departed dear ones, my sweet little friends. Well do I remember, and you will call to mind, their little innocent and interesting stories. Often have they come round me and taken me by the hand, but alas! I am no more destined to behold them."

The child who is taken becomes canonized, and the looks of the homeliest babe seem in the retrospect "heavenly the three last days of his life." But it appears that James and Mary had indeed been children more than usually engaging; a record was preserved a long while in the family of their remarks and "little innocent and interesting stories," and the blow and the blank were the more sensible.

Early the next month Robert Stevenson must proceed upon his voyage of inspection, part by land, part by sea.

He left his wife plunged in low spirits; the thought of his loss, and still more of her concern, was continually present in his mind, and he draws in his letters home an interesting picture of his family relations:

"Windygates Inn, Monday (Postmark July 16th).

"My dearest Jeannie,—While the people of the inn are getting me a little bit of something to eat, I sit down to tell you that I had a most excellent passage across the water, and got to Wemyss at mid-day. I hope the children will be very good, and that Robert will take a course with you to learn his Latin lessons daily; he may, however, read English in company. Let them have strawberries on Saturdays."

"Westhaven, 17th July.

"I have been occupied to-day at the harbour of Newport opposite Dundee, and am this far on my way to Arbroath. You may tell the boys that I slept last night in Mr. Steadman's tent. I found my bed rather hard, but the lodgings were otherwise extremely comfortable. The encampment is on the Fife side of the Tay, immediately opposite to Dundee. From the door of the tent you command the most beautiful view of the Firth, both up and down, to a great extent. At night all was serene and still, the sky presented the most beautiful appearance of bright stars, and the morning was ushered in with the song of many little birds."

"Aberdeen, July 19th.

"I hope, my dear, that you are going out of doors regularly and taking much exercise. I would have you to *make the markets daily* —and by all means to take a seat in the coach once or twice in the week and see what is going on in town. [The family were at the seaside.] It will be good not to be too great a stranger to the house. It will be rather painful at first, but as it is to be done, I would have you not to be too strange to the house in town.

"Tell the boys that I fell in with a soldier—his name is Henderson —who was twelve years with Lord Wellington and other commanders. He returned very lately with only eight-pence-half-penny in his pocket, and found his father and mother both in life, though they had never heard from him, nor he from them. He carried my great-coat and umbrella a few miles."

"Fraserburgh, July 20th.

"Fraserburgh is the same dull place which [Auntie] Mary and Jeannie found it. As I am traveling along the coast which they are acquainted with, you had better cause Robert to bring down the map from Edinburgh; and it will be a good exercise in geography for the young folks to trace my course. I hope they have entered upon the writing. The library will afford abundance of excellent books, which I wish you would employ a little. I hope you are doing me the favor

to go much out with the boys, which will do you much good and prevent them from getting so very much overheated."

[*To the Boys—Printed.*]

"When I had last the pleasure of writing to you, your dear little brother James and your sweet little sister Mary were still with us. But it has pleased God to remove them to another and a better world, and we must submit to the will of Providence. I must, however, request of you to think sometimes upon them, and to be very careful not to do anything that will displease or vex your mother. It is therefore proper that you do not roamp [Scottish indeed] too much about, and that you learn your lessons.

". . . I went to Fraserburgh and visited Kinnaird Head Lighthouse, which I found in good order. All this time I traveled upon good roads, and paid many a toll-man by the way; but from Fraserburgh to Banff there is no toll-bars, and the road is so bad that I had to walk up and down many a hill, and for want of bridges the horses had to drag the chaise up to the middle of the wheels in water. At Banff I saw a large ship of 300 tons lying on the sands upon her beam-ends, and a wreck for want of a good harbor. Captain Wilson—to whom I beg my compliments—will show you a ship of 300 tons. At the towns of Macduff, Banff, and Portsoy, many of the houses are built of marble, and the rocks on this part of the coast or sea-side are marble. But, my dear Boys, unless marble be polished and dressed, it is a very coarse-looking stone, and has no more beauty than common rock. As a proof of this, ask the favor of your mother to take you to Thompson's Marble Works in South Leith, and you will see marble in all its stages, and perhaps you may there find Portsoy marble! The use I wish to make of this is to tell you that, without education, a man is just like a block of rough, unpolished marble. Notice, in proof of this, how much Mr. Neill and Mr. M'Gregor [the tutor] know, and observe how little a man knows who is not a good scholar. On my way to Fochabers I passed through many thousand acres of Fir timber, and saw many deer running in these woods."

[*To Mrs. Stevenson.*]

"Inverness, July 21st.

"I propose going to church in the afternoon, and as I have breakfasted late, I shall afterwards take a walk, and dine about six o'clock. I do not know who is the clergyman here, but I shall think of you all. I travelled in the mail-coach [from Banff] almost alone. While it was daylight I kept the top, and the passing along a country I had never before seen was a considerable amusement. But, my dear, you are all much in my thoughts, and many are the objects which recall the recollection of our tender and engaging children we have so recently lost.

We must not, however, repine. I could not for a moment wish any change of circumstances in their case; and in every comparative view of their state, I see the Lord's goodness in removing them from an evil world to an abode of bliss; and I must earnestly hope that you may be enabled to take such a view of this affliction as to live in the happy prospect of our all meeting again to part no more—and that under such considerations you are getting up your spirits. I wish you would walk about, and by all means go to town, and do not sit much at home."

"Inverness, July 23d.

"I am duly favored with your much-valued letter, and I am happy to find that you are so much with my mother, because that sort of variety has a tendency to occupy the mind, and to keep it from brooding too much upon one subject. Sensibility and tenderness are certainly two of the most interesting and pleasing qualities of the mind. These qualities are also none of the least of the many endearingments of the female character. But if that kind of sympathy and pleasing melancholy, which is familiar to us under distress, be much indulged, it becomes habitual, and takes such a hold of the mind as to absorb all the other affections, and unfit us for the duties and proper enjoyments of life. Resignation sinks into a kind of peevish discontent. I am far, however, from thinking there is the least danger of this in your case, my dear; for you have been on all occasions enabled to look upon the fortunes of this life as under the direction of a higher power, and have always preserved that propriety and consistency of conduct in all circumstances which endears your example to your family in particular, and to your friends. I am therefore, my dear, for you to go out much, and to go to the house up-stairs [he means to go up-stairs in the house, to visit the place of the dead children], and to put yourself in the way of the visits of your friends. I wish you would call on the Miss Grays, and it would be a good thing upon a Saturday to dine with my mother, and take Meggy and all the family with you, and let them have their strawberries in town. The tickets of one of the *old-fashione'* *roaches* would take you all up, and if the evening were good, they could all walk down, excepting Meggy and little David."

"Inverness, July 25th, 11 p. m.

"Captain Wemyss, of Wemyss, has come to Inverness to go the voyage with me, and as we are sleeping in a double-bedded room, I must no longer transgress. You must remember me the best way you can to the children."

"On board of the Lighthouse Yacht, July 29th.

"I got to Cromarty yesterday about mid-day, and went to church. It happened to be the sacrament there, and I heard a Mr. Smith at that place conclude the service with a very suitable exhortation. There seemed a great concourse of people, but they had rather an unfortunate

day for them at the tent, as it rained a good deal. After drinking tea at the inn, Captain Wemyss accompanied me on board, and we sailed about eight last night. The wind at present being rather a beating one, I think I shall have an opportunity of standing into the bay of Wick, and leaving this letter to let you know my progress and that I am well."

"Lighthouse Yacht, Stornoway, August 4th.

"To-day we had prayers on deck as usual when at sea. I read the 14th chapter, I think, of Job. Captain Wemyss has been in the habit of doing this on board his own ship, agreeably to the Articles of War. Our passage round the Cape [Cape Wrath] was rather a cross one, and as the wind was northerly, we had a pretty heavy sea, but upon the whole have made a good passage, leaving many vessels behind us in Orkney. I am quite well, my dear; and Captain Wemyss, who has much spirit, and who is much given to observation, and a perfect enthusiast in his profession, enlivens the voyage greatly. Let me entreat you to move about much, and take a walk with the boys to Leith. I think they have still many places to see there, and I wish you would indulge them in this respect. Mr. Scales is the best person I know for showing them the sailcloth-weaving, etc., and he would have great pleasure in undertaking this. My dear, I trust soon to be with you, and that through the goodness of God we shall meet all well.

"There are two vessels lying here with emigrants for America, each with eighty people on board, at all ages, from a few days to upwards of sixty! Their prospects must be very forlorn to go with a slender purse for distant and unknown countries."

"Lighthouse Yacht, off Greenock, Aug. 18th.

"It was after *church-time* before we got here, but we had prayers upon deck on the way up the Clyde. This has, upon the whole, been a very good voyage, and Captain Wemyss, who enjoys it much, has been an excellent companion; we met with pleasure, and shall part with regret."

Strange that, after his long experience, my grandfather should have learned so little of the attitude and even the dialect of the spiritually-minded; that after forty-four years in a most religious circle, he could drop without sense of incongruity from a period of accepted phrases to "trust his wife was *getting up her spirits,*" or think to reassure her as to the character of Captain Wemyss by mentioning that he had read prayers on the deck of his frigate *"agreeably to the Articles of War"!* Yet there is no doubt—and it is one of the most agreeable features

of the kindly series—that he was doing his best to please, and there is little doubt that he succeeded. Almost all my grandfather's private letters have been destroyed. This correspondence has not only been preserved entire, but stitched up in the same covers with the works of the godly women, the Reverend John Campbell, and the painful Mrs. Ogle. I did not think to mention the good dame, but she comes in usefully as an example. Amongst the treasures of the ladies of my family, her letters have been honored with a volume to themselves. I read about a half of them myself; then handed over the task to one of stancher resolution, with orders to communicate any fact that should be found to illuminate these pages. Not one was found; it was her only art to communicate by post second-rate sermons at second hand; and such, I take it, was the correspondence in which my grandmother delighted. If I am right, that of Robert Stevenson, with his quaint smack of the contemporary *Sandford and Merton,* his interest in the whole page of experience, his perpetual quest and fine scent of all that seems romantic to a boy, his needless pomp of language, his excellent good sense, his unfeigned, unstained, unwearied, human kindliness, would seem to her, in a comparison, dry and trivial and worldly. And if these letters were by an exception cherished and preserved, it would be for one or both of two reasons—because they dealt with and were bittersweet reminders of a time of sorrow; or because she was pleased, perhaps touched, by the writer's guileless effort to seem spiritually minded.

After this date there were two more births and two more deaths, so that the number of the family remained unchanged; in all five children survived to reach maturity and to outlive their parents.

CHAPTER II

THE SERVICE OF THE NORTHERN LIGHTS

I

IT WERE hard to imagine a contrast more sharply defined than that between the lives of the men and women of this family: the one so chambered, so centered in the affections and the sensibilities; the other so active, healthy, and expeditious. From May to November, Thomas Smith and Robert Stevenson were on the mail, in the saddle, or at sea; and my grandfather, in particular, seems to have been possessed with a demon of activity in travel. In 1802, by direction of the Northern Lighthouse Board, he had visited the coast of England from St. Bees, in Cumberland, and round by the Scilly Islands to some place undecipherable by me; in all a distance of 2,500 miles. In 1806 I find him starting "on a tour round the South Coast of England, from the Humber to the Severn." Peace was not long declared ere he found means to visit Holland, where he was in time to see, in the navy yard at Helvoetsluys, "about twenty of Bonaparte's *English flotilla* lying in a state of decay, the object of curiosity to Englishmen." By 1834 he seems to have been acquainted with the coast of France from Dieppe to Bordeaux; and a main part of his duty as Engineer to the Board of Northern Lights was one round of dangerous and laborious travel.

In 1786, when Thomas Smith first received the appointment, the extended and formidable coast of Scotland was lighted at a single point—the Isle of May, in the jaws of the Firth of Forth, where, on a tower already a hundred and fifty years old, an open coal-fire blazed in an iron chauffer. The whole archipelago, thus nightly

plunged in darkness, was shunned by seagoing vessels, and the favorite courses were north about Shetland and west about St. Kilda. When the Board met, four new lights formed the extent of their intentions—Kinnaird Head in Aberdeenshire, at the eastern elbow of the coast; North Ronaldsay, in Orkney, to keep the north and guide ships passing to the south'ard of Shetland; Island Glass, on Harris, to mark the inner shore of the Hebrides and illuminate the navigation of the Minch; and the Mull of Kintyre.

These works were to be attempted against obstacles, material and financial, that might have staggered the most bold. Smith had no ship at his command till 1791; the roads in those outlandish quarters where his business lay were scarce passable when they existed, and the tower on the Mull of Kintyre stood eleven months unlighted while the apparatus toiled and foundered by the way among rocks and mosses. Not only had towers to be built and apparatus transplanted, the supply of oil must be maintained, and the men fed, in the same inaccessible and distant scenes; a whole service, with its routine and hierarchy, had to be called out of nothing; and a new trade (that of lightkeeper) to be taught, recruited, and organized. The funds of the Board were at the first laughably inadequate. They embarked on their career on a loan of twelve hundred pounds, and their income in 1789, after relief by a fresh Act of Parliament, amounted to less than three hundred. It must be supposed that the thoughts of Thomas Smith, in these early years, were sometimes colored with despair; and since he built and lighted one tower after another, and created and bequeathed to his successors the elements of an excellent administration, it may be conceded that he was not after all an unfortunate choice for a first engineer.

War added fresh complications. In 1794 Smith came "very near to be taken" by a French squadron. In 1813 Robert Stevenson was cruising about the neighborhood of Cape Wrath in the immediate fear of Commodore Rogers. The men, and especially the sailors, of the Lighthouse service must be protected by a medal and

ticket from the brutal activity of the press-gang. And the zeal of volunteer patroits was at times embarrassing.

"I set off on foot," writes my grandfather, "for Marazion, a town at the head of Mount's Bay, where I was in hopes of getting a boat to freight. I had just got that length, and was making the necessary inquiry, when a young man, accompanied by several idle-looking fellows, came up to me, and in a hasty tone said, 'Sir, in the king's name I seize your person and papers.' To which I replied that I should be glad to see his authority, and know the reason of an address so abrupt. He told me the want of time prevented his taking regular steps, but that it would be necessary for me to return to Penzance, as I was suspected of being a French spy. I proposed to submit my papers to the nearest Justice of the Peace, who was immediately applied to, and came to the inn where I was. He seemed to be greatly agitated, and quite at a loss how to proceed. The complaint preferred against me was 'that I had examined the Longships Lighthouse with the most minute attention, and was no less particular in my inquiries at the keepers of the lighthouse regarding the sunk rocks lying off the Land's End, with the set of the currents and tides along the coast: that I seemed particularly to regret the situation of the rocks called the Seven Stones, and the loss of a beacon which the Trinity Board had caused to be fixed on the Wolf Rock; that I had taken notes of the bearings of several sunk rocks, and a drawing of the lighthouse, and of Cape Cornwall. Further, that I had refused the honor of Lord Edgecombe's invitation to dinner, offering as an apology that I had some particular business on hand.' "

My grandfather produced in answer his credentials and letter of credit; but the justice, after perusing them, "very gravely observed that they were 'musty bits of paper,' " and proposed to maintain the arrest. Some more enlightened magistrates at Penzance relieved him of suspicion and left him at liberty to pursue his journey—"which I did with so much eagerness," he adds, "that I gave the two coal lights on the Lizard only a very transient look."

Lighthouse operations in Scotland differed essentially in character from those in England. The English coast is in comparison a habitable, homely place, well supplied with towns; the Scottish presents hundreds of miles of savage islands and desolate moors. The Parliamentary committee of 1834, profoundly ignorant of this distinction, insisted with my grandfather that the work at the

various stations should be let out on contract "in the neighborhood," where sheep and deer, and gulls and cormorants, and a few ragged gillies, perhaps crouching in a beehive house, made up the only neighbors. In such situations repairs and improvements could only be overtaken by collecting (as my grandfather expressed it) a few "lads," placing them under charge of a foreman, and despatching them about the coast as occasion served. The particular danger of these seas increased the difficulty. The course of the lighthouse tender lies amid iron-bound coasts, among tide-races, the whirlpools of the Pentland Firth, flocks of islands, flocks of reefs, many of them uncharted. The aid of steam was not yet. At first in random coasting sloop, and afterward in the cutter belonging to the service, the engineer must ply and run amongst these multiplied dangers, and sometimes late into the stormy autumn. For pages together my grandfather's diary preserves a record of these rude experiences; of hard winds and rough seas; and of "the try-sail and storm-jib, those old friends which I never like to see." They do not tempt to quotation, but it was the man's element, in which he lived, and delighted to live, and some specimen must be presented. On Friday, Sept. 10th, 1830, the *Regent* lying in Lerwick Bay, we have this entry: "The gale increases, with continued rain." On the morrow, Saturday, 11th, the weather appeared to moderate, and they put to sea, only to be driven by evening into Levenswick. There they lay, "rolling much," with both anchors ahead and the square yard on deck, till the morning of Saturday, 18th. Saturday and Sunday they were plying to the southward with a "strong breeze and a heavy sea," and on Sunday evening anchored in Otterswick. "Monday, 20th, it blows so fresh that we have no communication with the shore. We see Mr. Rome on the beach, but we can not communicate with him. It blows 'mere fire,' as the sailors express it." And for three days more the diary goes on with tales of davits unshipped, high seas, strong gales from the southward, and the ship driven to refuge in Kirkwall or Deer Sound. I have many a passage before me to transcribe, in which my

grandfather draws himself as a man of exactitude about minute and anxious details. It must not be forgotten that these voyages in the tender were the particular pleasure and reward of his existence; that he had in him a reserve of romance which carried him delightedly over these hardships and perils; that to him it was "great gain" to be eight nights and seven days in the savage bay of Levenswick—to read a book in the much agitated cabin—to go on deck and hear the gale scream in his ears, and see the landscape dark with rain, and the ship plunge at her two anchors—and to turn in at night and wake again at morning, in his narrow berth, to the clamorous and continued voices of the gale.

His perils and escapes were beyond counting. I shall only refer to two: the first, because of the impression made upon himself; the second, from the incidental picture it presents of the north islanders. On the 9th October, 1794, he took passage from Orkney in the sloop *Elizabeth* of Stromness. She made a fair passage till within view of Kinnaird Head, where, as she was becalmed some three miles in the offing, and wind seemed to threaten from the southeast, the captain landed him, to continue his journey more expeditiously ashore. A gale immediately followed, and the *Elizabeth* was driven back to Orkney and lost with all hands. The second escape I have been in the habit of hearing related by an eye-witness, my own father, from the earliest days of childhood. On a September night, the *Regent* lay in the Pentland Firth in a fog and a violent and windless swell. It was still dark, when they were alarmed by the sound of breakers, and an anchor was immediately let go. The peep of dawn discovered them swinging in desperate proximity to the Isle of Swona[1] and the surf bursting close under their stern. There was in this place a hamlet of the inhabitants, fisherfolk and wreckers: their huts stood close about the head of the beach. All slept; the doors were closed, and there was no smoke, and the anxious watchers on board ship

[1] This is only a probable hypothesis: I have tried to identify my father's anecdote in my grandfather's diary, and may very well have been deceived.—[R. L. S.]

seemed to contemplate a village of the dead. It was thought possible to launch a boat and tow the *Regent* from her place of danger; and with this view a signal of distress was made and a gun fired with a red-hot poker from the galley. Its detonation awoke the sleepers. Door after door was opened, and in the gray light of the morning fisher after fisher was seen to come forth, yawning and stretching himself, nightcap on head. Fisher after fisher, I wrote, and my pen tripped; for it should rather stand wrecker after wrecker. There was no emotion, no animation, it scarce seemed any interest; not a hand was raised; but all callously awaited the harvest of the sea, and their children stood by their side and waited also. To the end of his life, my father remembered that amphitheater of placid spectators on the beach, and with a special and natural animosity, the boys of his own age. But presently a light air sprang up, and filled the sails, and fainted, and filled them again; and little by little the *Regent* fetched way against the swell, and clawed off shore into the turbulent firth.

The purpose of these voyages was to effect a landing on open beaches or among shelving rocks, not for persons only, but for coals and food, and the fragile furniture of light-rooms. It was often impossible. In 1831 I find my grandfather "hovering for a week" about the Pentland Skerries for a chance to land; and it was almost always difficult. Much knack and enterprise were early developed among the seamen of the service; their management of boats is to this day a matter of admiration; and I find my grandfather in his diary depicting the nature of their excellence in one happily descriptive phrase, when he remarks that Captain Soutar had landed "the small stores and nine casks of oil *with all the activity of a smuggler.*" And it was one thing to land, another to get on board again. I have here a passage from the diary, where it seems to have been touch-and-go. "I landed at Tarbetness, on the eastern side of the point in *a mere gale or blast of wind* from west-southwest, at 2 P. M. It blew so fresh that the captain, in a kind of despair, went off to the ship, leaving myself and the steward ashore.

While I was in the light-room, I felt it shaking and waving, not with the tremor of the Bell Rock, but with the *waving of a tree!* This the lightkeepers seemed to be quite familiar to, the principal keeper remarking that 'it was very pleasant,' perhaps meaning interesting or curious. The captain worked the vessel into smooth water with admirable dexterity, and I got on board again about 6 P. M. from the other side of the point." But not even the dexterity of Soutar could prevail always; and my grandfather must at times have been left in strange berths and with but rude provision. I may instance the case of my father, who was storm-bound three days upon an islet, sleeping in the uncemented and unchimneyed houses of the islanders, and subsisting on a diet of nettle-soup and lobsters.

The name of Soutar has twice escaped my pen, and I feel I owe him a vignette. Soutar first attracted notice as mate of a praam at the Bell Rock, and rose gradually to be captain of the *Regent.* He was active, admirably skilled in his trade, and a man incapable of fear. Once, in London, he fell among a gang of confidence-men, naturally deceived by his rusticity and his prodigious accent. They plied him with drink—a hopeless enterprise, for Soutar could not be made drunk; they proposed cards, and Soutar would not play. At last, one of them, regarding him with a formidable countenance, inquired if he were not frightened? "I'm no' very easy fleyed," replied the captain. And the rooks withdrew after some easier pigeon. So many perils shared, and the partial familiarity of so many voyages, had given this man a stronghold in my grandfather's estimation; and there is no doubt but he had the art to court and please him with much hypocritical skill. He usually dined on Sundays in the cabin. He used to come down daily after dinner for a glass of port or whisky, often in his full rig of sou'-wester, oilskins, and long boots; and I have often heard it described how insinuatingly he carried himself on these appearances, artfully combining the extreme of deference with a blunt and seamanlike demeanor. My father and uncles, with the devilish penetration of the boy, were

far from being deceived, and my father, indeed, was favored with an object-lesson not to be mistaken. He had crept one rainy night into an apple barrel on deck, and from this place of ambush overheard Soutar and a comrade conversing in their oilskins. The smooth sycophant of the cabin had wholly disappeared, and the boy listened with wonder to a vulgar and truculent ruffian. Of Soutar, I may say *tantum vidi,* having met him in the Leith docks now more than thirty years ago, when he abounded in the praises of my grandfather, encouraged me (in the most admirable manner) to pursue his footprints, and left impressed forever on my memory the image of his own Bardolphian nose. He died not long after.

The engineer was not only exposed to the hazards of the sea; he must often ford his way by land to remote and scarce accessible places, beyond reach of the mail or the post-chaise, beyond even the tracery of the bridle-path, and guided by natives across bog and heather. Up to 1807 my grandfather seems to have traveled much on horseback; but he then gave up the idea—"such," he writes with characteristic emphasis and capital letters, "is the Plague of Baiting." He was a good pedestrian; at the age of fifty-eight I find him covering seventeen miles over the moors of the Mackay country in less than seven hours, and that is not bad traveling for a scramble. The piece of country traversed was already a familiar track, being that between Loch Eriboll and Cape Wrath; and I think I can scarce do better than reproduce from the diary some traits of his first visit. The tender lay in Loch Eriboll; by five in the morning they sat down to breakfast on board; by six they were ashore—my grandfather, Mr. Slight, an assistant, and Soutar of the jolly nose, and had been taken in charge by two gentlemen of the neighborhood and a pair of gillies. About noon they reached the Kyle of Durness and passed the ferry. By half-past three they were at Cape Wrath—not yet known by the emphatic abbreviation of "The Cape,"—and beheld upon all sides of them unfrequented shores, an expanse of desert moor, and the high-piled Western Ocean. The sight of the tower was chosen. Perhaps it is by inheritance of

blood, but I know few things more inspiriting than this location of a lighthouse in a designated space of heather and air, through which the sea-birds are still flying. By 9 P. M. the return journey had brought them again to the shores of the Kyle. The night was dirty, and, as the sea was high and the ferry-boat small, Soutar and Mr. Stevenson were left on the far side, while the rest of the party embarked and were received into the darkness. They made, in fact, a safe though an alarming passage; but the ferryman refused to repeat the adventure; and my grandfather and the captain long paced the beach, impatient for their turn to pass, and tormented with rising anxiety as to the fate of their companions. At length they sought the shelter of a shepherd's house. "We had miserable upputting," the diary continues, "and on both sides of the ferry much anxiety of mind. Our beds were clean straw, and but for the circumstance of the boat, I should have slept as soundly as ever I did after a walk through moss and mire of sixteen hours."

To go round the lights, even to-day, is to visit past centuries. The tide of tourists that flows yearly in Scotland, vulgarizing all where it approaches, is still defined by certain barriers. It will be long ere there is a hotel at Sumburgh or a hydropathic at Cape Wrath; it will be long ere any *char-à-banc,* laden with tourists, shall drive up to Barra Head or Monach, the Island of the Monks. They are farther from London than St. Petersburg, and except for the towers, sounding and shining all night with fog-bells and the radiance of the light-room, glittering by day with the trivial brightness of white paint, these island and moorland stations seem inaccessible to the civilization of to-day, and even to the end of my grandfather's career the isolation was far greater. There ran no post at all in the Long Island; from the lighthouse on Barra Head a boat must be sent for letters as far as Tobermory, between sixty and seventy miles of open sea; and the posts of Shetland, which had surprised Sir Walter Scott in 1814, were still unimproved in 1833, when my grandfather reported on the subject. The group contained at the time a population of 30,000 souls, and enjoyed a trade which

had increased in twenty years seven-fold, to between three and four thousand tons. Yet the mails were despatched and received by chance coasting vessels at the rate of a penny a letter; six and eight weeks often elapsed between opportunities, and when a mail was to be made up, sometimes at a moment's notice, the bellman was sent hastily through the street of Lerwick. Between Shetland and Orkney, only seventy miles apart, there was "no trade communication whatever."

Such was the state of affairs, only sixty years ago, with the three largest clusters of the Scottish Archipelago; and forty-seven years earlier, when Thomas Smith began his rounds, or forty-two, when Robert Stevenson became conjoined with him in these excursions, the barbarism was deep, the people sunk in superstition, the circumstances of their life perhaps unique in history. Lerwick and Kirkwall, like Guam or the Bay of Islands, were but barbarous ports where whalers called to take up and to return experienced seamen. On the outlying islands the clergy lived isolated, thinking other thoughts, dwelling in a different country from their parishioners, like missionaries in the South Seas. My grandfather's unrivaled treasury of anecdote was never written down; it embellished his talk while he yet was, and died with him when he died; and such as have been preserved relate principally to the islands of Ronaldsay and Sanday, two of the Orkney group. These bordered on one of the water-highways of civilization; a great fleet passed annually in their view, and of the shipwrecks of the world they were the scene and cause of a proportion wholly incommensurable to their size. In one year, 1798, my grandfather found the remains of no fewer than five vessels on the isle of Sanday, which is scarcely twelve miles long.

"Hardly a year passed," he writes, "without instances of this kind; for, owing to the projecting points of this strangely formed island, the lowness and whiteness of its eastern shores, and the wonderful manner in which the scanty patches of land are intersected with lakes and pools of water, it becomes, even in daylight, a deception, and has often been fatally mistaken for an open sea. It had even become proverbial with some of the inhabitants to observe that 'if wrecks were to happen,

they might as well be sent to the poor isle of Sanday as anywhere else.' On this and the neighboring islands the inhabitants have certainly had their share of wrecked goods, for the eye is presented with these melancholy remains in almost every form. For example, although quarries are to be met with generally in these islands, and the stones are very suitable for building dykes [*Anglicé,* walls], yet instances occur of the land being enclosed, even to a considerable extent, with ship-timbers. The author has actually seen a park [*Anglicé,* meadow] paled round chiefly with cedar-wood and mahogany from the wreck of a Honduras-built ship; and in one island, after the wreck of a ship laden with wine, the inhabitants have been known to take claret to their barley-meal porridge. On complaining to one of the pilots of the badness of his boat's sails, he replied to the author with some degree of pleasantry, 'Had it been His will that you camena' here wi' your lights, we might 'a' had better sails to our boats, and more o' other things.' It may further be mentioned that when some of Lord Dundas's farms are to be let in these islands a competition takes place for the lease, and it is *bona fide* understood that a much higher rent is paid than the lands would otherwise give were it not for the chance of making considerably by the agency and advantages attending shipwrecks on the shores of the respective farms."

The people of North Ronaldsay still spoke Norse, or rather, mixed it with their English. The walls of their huts were built to a great thickness of rounded stones from the sea-beach; the roof flagged, loaded with earth, and perforated by a single hole for the escape of smoke. The grass grew beautifully green on the flat house-top, where the family would assemble with their dogs and cats, as on a pastoral lawn; there were no windows, and, in my grandfather's expression, "there was really no demonstration of a house unless it were the diminutive door." He once landed on Ronaldsay with two friends. "The inhabitants crowded and pressed so much upon the strangers that the bailiff, or resident factor of the island, blew with his ox-horn, calling out to the natives to stand off and let the gentlemen come forward to the laird; upon which one of the islanders, as spokesman, called out, 'God ha'e us, man! thou needsna mak' sic a noise. It's no' every day we ha'e *three hatted men* on our isle.'" When the Surveyor of Taxes came (for the first time, perhaps) to Sanday, and began in the King's name to complain of the unconscionable swarms of dogs, and to menace the inhab-

itants with taxation, it chanced that my grandfather and his friend, Dr. Patrick Neill, were received by an old lady in a Ronaldsay hut. Her hut, which was similar to the model described, stood on a Ness, or point of land jutting into the sea. They were made welcome in the firelit cellar, placed "in *casey* or straw-worked chairs, after the Norwegian fashion, with arms, and a canopy overhead," and given milk in a wooden dish. These hospitalities attended to, the old lady turned at once to Dr. Neill, whom she took for the Surveyor of Taxes. "Sir," said she, "gin ye'll tell the King that I canna keep the Ness free o' the Bangers (sheep) without twa hun's, and twa guid hun's too, he'll pass me threa the tax on dugs."

This familiar confidence, these traits of engaging simplicity, are characters of a secluded people. Mankind—and, above all, islanders—come very swiftly to a bearing, and find very readily, upon one convention or another, a tolerable corporate life. The danger is to those from without, who have not grown up from childhood in the islands, but appear suddenly in that narrow horizon, life-sized apparition. For these no bond of humanity exists, no feeling of kinship is awakened by their peril; they will assist at a shipwreck, like the fisher-folk of Lunga, as spectators, and, when the fatal scene is over, and the beach strewn with dead bodies, they will fence their fields with mahogany, and, after a decent grace, sup claret to their porridge. It is not wickedness: it is scarce evil; it is only, in its highest power, the sense of isolation and the wise disinterestedness of feeble and poor races. Think how many viking ships had sailed by these islands in the past, how many vikings had landed, and raised turmoil, and broken up the barrows of the dead, and carried off the wines of the living; and blame them, if you are able, for that belief (which may be called one of the parables of the devil's gospel) that a man rescued from the sea will prove the bane of his deliverer. It might be thought that my grandfather, coming there unknown, and upon an employment so hateful to the inhabitants, must have run the hazard of his life. But this were to misunderstand. He came franked by the laird and the clergyman; he was the

King's officer; the work was "opened with prayer by the Rev. Walter Trail, minister of the parish"; God and the King had decided it, and the people of these pious islands bowed their heads. There landed, indeed, in North Ronaldsay, during the last decade of the eighteenth century, a traveler whose life seems really to have been imperiled. A very little man of a swarthy complexion, he came ashore, exhausted and unshaved, from a long boat passage, and lay down to sleep in the home of the parish schoolmaster. But he had been seen landing. The inhabitants had identified him for a Pict, as, by some singular confusion of name, they call the dark and dwarfish aboriginal people of the land. Immediately the obscure ferment of a race-hatred, grown into a superstition, began to work in their bosoms, and they crowded about the house and the room-door with fearful whisperings. For some time the schoolmaster held them at bay, and at last despatched a messenger to call my grandfather. He came: he found the islanders beside themselves at this unwelcome resurrection of the dead and the detested; he was shown, as adminicular of testimony, the traveler's uncouth and thick-soled boots; he argued, and finding argument unavailing, consented to enter the room and examine with his own eyes the sleeping Pict. One glance was sufficient: the man was now a missionary, but he had been before that an Edinburgh shopkeeper with whom my grandfather had dealt. He came forth again with this report, and the folk of the island, wholly relieved, dispersed to their own houses. They were timid as sheep and ignorant as limpets; that was all. But the Lord deliver us from the tender mercies of a frightened flock!

I will give two more instances of their superstition. When Sir Walter Scott visited the Stones of Stennis, my grandfather put in his pocket a hundred-foot line, which he unfortunately lost.

"Some years afterwards," he writes, "one of my assistants on a visit to the Stones of Stennis took shelter from a storm in a cottage close by the lake; and seeing a box-measuring-line in the bole or sole of the cottage window, he asked the woman where she got this well-known professional appendage. She said: 'O sir, ane of the bairns

fand it lang syne at the Stanes; and when drawing it out we took fright, and thinking it had belanged to the fairies, we threw it into the bole, and it has layen there ever since.' "

This is for the one; the last shall be a sketch by the master hand of Scott himself:

"At the village of Stromness, on the Orkney main island, called Pomona, lived, in 1814, an aged dame called Bessie Millie, who helped out her subsistence by selling favorable winds to mariners. He was a venturous master of a vessel who left the roadstead of Stromness without paying his offering to propitiate Bessie Millie! Her fee was extremely moderate, being exactly sixpence, for which she boiled her kettle and gave the bark the advantage of her prayers, for she disclaimed all unlawful acts. The wind thus petitioned for was sure, she said, to arrive, though occasionally the mariners had to wait some time for it. The woman's dwelling and appearance were not unbecoming her pretensions. Her house, which was on the brow of the steep hill on which Stromness is founded, was only accessible by a series of dirty and precipitous lanes, and for exposure might have been the abode of Eolus himself, in whose commodities the inhabitant dealt. She herself was, as she told us, nearly one hundred years old, withered and dried up like a mummy. A clay-colored kerchief, folded round her neck, corresponded in color to her corpse-like complexion. Two light blue eyes that gleamed with a lustre like that of insanity, an utterance of astonishing rapidity, a nose and chin that almost met together, and a ghastly expression of cunning, gave her the effect of Hecate. Such was Bessie Millie, to whom the mariners paid a sort of tribute with a feeling between jest and earnest."

II

From about the beginning of the century up to 1807 Robert Stevenson was in partnership with Thomas Smith. In the last-named year the partnership was dissolved; Thomas Smith returning to his business, and my grandfather becoming sole engineer to the Board of Northern Lights.

I must try, by excerpts from his diary and correspondence, to convey to the reader some idea of the ardency and thoroughness with which he threw himself into the largest and least of his multifarious engagements in this service. But first I must say a word or two upon the life of light-

keepers, and the temptations to which they are more particularly exposed. The lightkeeper occupies a position apart among men. In sea-towers the complement has always been three since the deplorable business in the Eddystone, when one keeper died, and the survivor, signaling in vain for relief, was compelled to live for days with the dead body. These usually pass their time by the pleasant human expedient of quarreling; and sometimes, I am assured, not one of the three is on speaking terms with any other. On shore stations, which on the Scottish coast are sometimes hardly less isolated, the usual number is two, a principal and an assistant. The principal is dissatisfied with the assistant, or perhaps the assistant keeps pigeons, and the principal wants the water from the roof. Their wives and families are with them, living cheek by jowl. The children quarrel; Jockie hits Jimsie in the eye, and the mothers make haste to mingle in the dissension. Perhaps there is trouble about a broken dish; perhaps Mrs. Assistant is more highly born than Mrs. Principal and gives herself airs; and the men are drawn in and the servants presently follow. "Church privileges have been denied the keeper's and the assistant's servants," I read in one case, and the eminently Scots periphrasis means neither more nor less than excommunication, "on account of the discordant and quarrelsome state of the families. The cause, when inquired into, proves to be *tittle-tattle* on both sides." The tender comes round; the foremen and artificers go from station to station; the gossip flies through the whole system of the service, and the stories, disfigured and exaggerated, return to their own birthplace with the returning tender. The English Board was apparently shocked by the picture of these dissensions. "When the Trinity House can," I find my grandfather writing at Beechy Head, in 1834, "they do not appoint two keepers, they disagree so ill. A man who has a family is assisted by his family; and in this way, to my experience and present observation, the business is very much neglected. One keeper, is, in my view, a bad system. This day's visit to an English lighthouse convinces me of this, as the lightkeeper was walking on a staff with the gout, and the busi-

ness performed by one of his daughters, a girl of thirteen or fourteen years of age." This man received a hundred a year! It shows a different reading of human nature, perhaps typical of Scotland and England, that I find in my grandfather's diary the following pregnant entry: *"The lightkeepers, agreeing ill, keep one another to their duty."* But the Scottish system was not alone founded on this cynical opinion. The dignity and the comfort of the northern lightkeeper were both attended to. He had a uniform to "raise him in his own estimation, and in that of his neighbor, which is of consequence to a person of trust." "The keepers," my grandfather goes on, in another place, "are attended to in all the detail of accommodation in the best style as shipmasters; and this is believed to have a sensible effect upon their conduct, and to regulate their general habits as members of society." He notes, with the same dip of ink, that "the brasses were not clean, and the persons of the keepers not *trig"*; and thus we find him writing to a culprit: "I have to complain that you are not cleanly in your person, and that your manner of speech is ungentle, and rather inclines to rudeness. You must therefore take a different view of your duties as a lightkeeper." A high ideal for the service appears in these expressions, and will be more amply illustrated further on. But even the Scottish lightkeeper was frail. During the unbroken solitude of the winter months, when inspection is scarce possible, it must seem a vain toil to polish the brass hand-rail of the stair, or to keep an unrewarded vigil in the light-room; and the keepers are habitually tempted to the beginnings of sloth, and must unremittingly resist. He who temporizes with his conscience is already lost. I must tell here an anecdote that illustrates the difficulties of inspection. In the days of my uncle David and my father there was a station which they regarded with jealousy. The two engineers compared notes and were agreed. The tower was always clean, but seemed always to bear traces of a hasty cleansing, as though the keepers had been suddenly forewarned. On inquiry, it proved that such was the case, and that a wandering fiddler was the unfailing harbinger of the engineer. At last my father was

storm-stayed one Sunday in a port at the other side of the island. The visit was quite overdue, and as he walked across upon the Monday morning he promised himself that he should at last take the keepers unprepared. They were both waiting for him in uniform at the gate; the fiddler had been there on Saturday!

My grandfather, as will appear from the following extracts, was much a martinet, and had a habit of expressing himself on paper with an almost startling emphasis. Personally, with his powerful voice, sanguine countenance, and eccentric and original locutions, he was well qualified to inspire a salutary terror in the service.

"I find that the keepers have, by some means or another, got into the way of cleaning too much with rotton-stone and oil. I take the principal keeper to *task* on this subject, and make him bring a clean towel and clean one of the brazen frames, which leaves the towel in an odious state. This towel I put up in a sheet of paper, seal, and take with me to confront Mr. Murdoch, who has just left the station." "This letter"—a stern enumeration of complaints—"to lie a week on the light-room book-place, and to be put in the Inspector's hands when he comes round." "It is the most painful thing that can occur for me to have a correspondence of this kind with any of the keepers; and when I come to the Lighthouse, instead of having the satisfaction to meet them with approbation, it is distressing when one is obliged to put on a most angry countenance and demeanor; but from such culpable negligence as you have shown there is no avoiding it. I hold it as a fixed maxim, that when a man or a family put on a slovenly appearance in their houses, stairs, and lanterns, I always find their reflectors, burners, windows, and light in general, ill attended to; and, therefore, I must insist on cleanliness throughout." "I find you very deficient in the duty of the high tower. You thus place your appointment as Principal Keeper in jeopardy; and I think it necessary, as an old servant of the Board, to put you upon your guard once for all at this time. I call upon you to recollect what was formerly and is now said to you. The state of the backs of the reflectors at the high tower was disgraceful, as I pointed out to you on the spot. They were as if spitten upon, and greasy finger-marks upon the back straps. I demand an explanation of this state of things." "The cause of the Commissioners dismissing you is expressed in the minute; and it must be a matter of regret to you that you have been so much engaged in smuggling, and also that the Reports relative to the cleanliness of the Lighthouse, upon being referred to, rather added to their unfavorable opinion." "I do not go into the dwelling-house, but severely chide the lightkeepers for the disagreement that seems to subsist among

them." "The families of the two lightkeepers here agree very ill. I have effected a reconciliation for the present." "Things are in a very *humdrum* state here. There is no painting, and in and out of doors no taste or tidiness displayed. Robert's wife *greets* and M'Gregor's scolds; and Robert is so down-hearted that he says he is unfit for duty. I told him that if he was to mind wives' quarrels, and to take them up, the only way was for him and M'Gregor to go down to the point like Sir G. Grant and Lord Somerset." "I can not say that I have experienced a more unpleasant meeting than that of the light-house folks this morning, or ever saw a stronger example of unfeeling barbarity than the conduct which the ——s exhibited. These two cold-hearted persons, not contented with having driven the daughter of the poor nervous woman from her father's house, *both* kept *pouncing* at her, lest she should forget her great misfortune. Write me of their conduct. Do not make any communication of the state of these families at Kinnaird Head, as this would be like *Tale-bearing.*"

There is the great word out. Tales and Tale-bearing, always with the emphatic capitals, run continually in his correspondence. I will give but two instances:

"Write to [David, one of the lightkeepers] and caution him to be more prudent how he expresses himself. Let him attend his duty to the Lighthouse and his family concerns, and give less heed to Tale-bearers." "I have not your last letter at hand to quote its date; but, if I recollect, it contains some kind of tales, which nonsense I wish you would lay aside, and notice only the concerns of your family and the important charge committed to you."

Apparently, however, my grandfather was not himself inaccessible to the Tale-bearer, as the following indicates:

"In walking along with Mr. ——, I explain to him that I should be under the necessity of looking more closely into the business here from his conduct at Buddonness, which had given an instance of weakness in the Moral principle which had staggered my opinion of him. His answer was 'That will be with regard to the lass?' I told him I was to enter no farther with him upon the subject." "Mr. Miller appears to be master and man. I am sorry about this foolish fellow. Had I known his train, I should not, as I did, have rather forced him into the service. Upon finding the windows in the state they were, I turned upon Mr. Watt, and especially upon Mr. Stewart. The latter did not appear for a length of time to have visited the light-room. On asking the cause—did Mr. Watt and him *(sic)* disagree; he said no; but he had got very bad usage from the assistant, 'who was a very obstreperous man.' I could not bring Mr. Watt to put in language his objections to Miller; all I could get was that, he being your friend, and

saying he was unwell, he did not like to complain or to push the man; that the man seemed to have no liking to anything like work; that he was unruly; that, being an educated man, he despised them. I was, however, determined to have out of these *unwilling* witnesses the language alluded to. I fixed upon Mr. Stewart as chief; he hedged. My curiosity increased, and I urged. Then he said, 'What would I think, just exactly, of Mr. Watt being called an Old B——?' You may judge of my surprise. There was not another word uttered. This was quite enough, as coming from a person I should have calculated upon quite different behavior from. It spoke a volume of the man's mind and want of principle." "Object to the keeper keeping a Bull-Terrier dog of ferocious appearance. It is dangerous, as we land at all times of the night." "Have only to complain of the storehouse floor being spotted with oil. Give orders for this being instantly rectified, so that on my return to-morrow I may see things in good order." "The furniture of both houses wants much rubbing. Mrs. ——'s carpets are absurd beyond anything I have seen. I want her to turn the fenders up with the bottom to the fireplace: the carpets, when not likely to be in use, folded up and laid as a hearthrug partly under the fender."

My grandfather was king in the service to his fingertips. All should go in his way from the principal lightkeeper's coat to the assistant's fender, from the gravel in the garden-walks to the bad smell in the kitchen, or the oil-spots on the store-room floor. It might be thought there was nothing more calculated to awake men's resentment, and yet his rule was not more thorough than it was beneficent. His thought for the keepers was continual, and it did not end with their lives. He tried to manage their successions; he thought no pains too great to arrange between a widow and a son who had succeeded his father; he was often harassed and perplexed by tales of hardship; and I find him writing, almost in despair, of their improvident habits and the destitution that awaited their families upon a death. "The house being completely furnished, they come into possession without necessaries, and they go out NAKED. The insurance seems to have failed, and what next is to be tried?" While they lived he wrote behind their backs to arrange for the education of their children, or to get them other situations if they seemed unsuitable for the Northern Lights. When he was at a lighthouse on a Sunday he held prayers and heard the

children read. When a keeper was sick, he lent him his horse and sent him mutton and brandy from the ship. "The assistant's wife having been this morning confined, there was sent ashore a bottle of sherry and a few rusks—a practise which I have always observed in this service," he writes. They dwelt, many of them, in uninhabited isles or desert forelands, totally cut off from shops. Many of them were, besides, fallen into a rustic dishabitude of life, so that even when they visited a city they could scarce be trusted with their own affairs, as (for example) he who carried home to his children, thinking they were oranges, a bag of lemons. And my grandfather seems to have acted, at least in his early years, as a kind of gratuitous agent for the service. Thus I find him writing to a keeper in 1806, when his mind was already preoccupied with arrangements for the Bell Rock: "I am much afraid I stand very unfavorably with you as a man of promise, as I was to send several things of which I believe I have more than once got the memorandum. All I can say is that in this respect you are not singular. This makes me no better; but really I have been driven about beyond all example in my past experience, and have been essentially obliged to neglect my own urgent affairs." No servant of the Northern Lights came to Edinburgh but he was entertained at Baxter's Place to breakfast. There, at his own table, my grandfather sat down delightedly with his broad-spoken, homespun officers. His whole relation to the service was, in fact, patriarchal; and I believe I may say that throughout its ranks he was adored. I have spoken with many who knew him; I was his grandson, and their words may have very well been words of flattery; but there was one thing that could not be affected, and that was the look and light that came into their faces at the name of Robert Stevenson.

In the early part of the century the foreman builder was a young man of the name of George Peebles, a native of Anstruther. My grandfather had placed in him a very high degree of confidence, and he was already designated to be foreman at the Bell Rock, when on Christmas Day, 1806, on his way home from Orkney, he was lost in the

schooner *Traveler*. The tale of the loss of the *Traveler* is almost a replica of that of the *Elizabeth* of Stromness; like the *Elizabeth* she came as far as Kinnaird Head, was then surprised by a storm, driven back to Orkney, and bilged and sank on the island of Flotta. It seems it was about the dusk of the day when the ship struck, and many of the crew and passengers were drowned. About the same hour, my grandfather was in his office at the writing-table; and the room beginning to darken, he laid down his pen and fell asleep. In a dream he saw the door open and George Peebles come in, "reeling to and fro, and staggering like a drunken man," with water streaming from his head and body to the floor. There it gathered into a wave which, sweeping forward, submerged my grandfather. Well, no matter how deep; versions vary; and at last he awoke, and behold it was a dream! But it may be conceived how profoundly the impression was written even on the mind of a man averse from such ideas, when the news came of the wreck on Flotta and the death of George.

George's vouchers and accounts had perished with himself; and it appeared he was in debt to the Commissioners. But my grandfather wrote to Orkney twice, collected evidence of his disbursements, and proved him to be seventy pounds ahead. With this sum, he applied to George's brothers, and had it apportioned between their mother and themselves. He approached the board and got an annuity of £5 bestowed on the widow Peebles; and we find him writing her a long letter of explanation and advice, and pressing on her the duty of making a will. That he should thus act as executor was no singular instance. But besides this we are able to assist at some of the stages of a rather touching experiment: no less than an attempt to secure Charles Peebles heir to George's favor. He is despatched, under the character of "a fine young man"; recommended to gentlemen for "advice, as he's a stranger in your place, and indeed to this kind of charge, this being his first outset as Foreman"; and for a long while after, the letter-book, in the midst of that thrilling first year of the Bell Rock, is encumbered with pages of instruction and encouragement. The nature of a bill, and the pre-

cautions that are to be observed about discounting it, are expounded at length and with clearness. "You are not, I hope, neglecting, Charles, to work the harbor at spring-tides; and see that you pay the greatest attention to get the well so as to supply the keeper with water, for he is a very helpless fellow, and so unfond of hard work that I fear he could do ill to keep himself in water by going to the other side for it."—"With regard to spirits, Charles, I see very little occasion for it." These abrupt apostrophes sound to me like the voice of an awakened conscience; but they would seem to have reverberated in vain in the ears of Charles. There was trouble in Pladda, his scene of operations; his men ran away from him, there was at least a talk of calling in the Sheriff. "I fear," writes my grandfather, "you have been too indulgent, and I am sorry to add that men do not answer to be too well treated, a circumstance which I have experienced, and which you will learn as you go on in business." I wonder, was not Charles Peebles himself a case in point? Either death, at least, or disappointment and discharge, must have ended his service in the Northern Lights; and in later correspondence I look in vain for any mention of his name—Charles, I mean, not Peebles: for as late as 1839 my grandfather is patiently writing to another of the family: "I am sorry you took the trouble of applying to me about your son, as it lies quite out of my way to forward his views in the line of his profession as a Draper."

III

A professional life of Robert Stevenson has been already given to the world by his son David, and to that I would refer those interested in such matters. But my own design, which is to represent the man, would be very ill carried out if I suffered myself or my reader to forget that he was, first of all and last of all, an engineer. His chief claim to the style of a mechanical inventor is on account of the Jib or Balance Crane of the Bell Rock, which are beautiful contrivances. But the great merit of

this engineer was not in the field of engines. He was above all things a projector of works in the face of nature, and a modifier of nature itself. A road to be made, a tower to be built, a harbor to be constructed, a river to be trained and guided in its channel—these were the problems with which his mind was continually occupied; and for these and similar ends he traveled the world for more than half a century, like an artist, note-book in hand.

He once stood and looked on at the emptying of a certain oil-tube; he did so watch in hand, and accurately timed the operation; and in so doing offered the perfect type of his profession. The fact acquired might never be of use: it was acquired: another link in the world's huge chain of processes was brought down to figures and placed at the service of the engineer. "The very term mensuration sounds *engineer-like,*" I find him writing; and in truth what the engineer most properly deals with is that which can be measured, weighed, and numbered. The time of any operation in hours and minutes, its cost in pounds, shillings, and pence, the strain upon a given point in foot-pounds—these are his conquests, with which he must continually furnish his mind, and which, after he has acquired them, he must continually apply and exercise. They must be not only entries in note-books, to be hurriedly consulted; in the actor's phrase, he must be *stale* in them; in a word of my grandfather's, they must be "fixed in the mind like the ten fingers and ten toes."

These are the certainties of the engineer; so far he finds a solid footing and clear views. But the province of formulas and constants is restricted. Even the mechanical engineer comes at last to an end of his figures, and must stand up, a practical man, face to face with the discrepancies of nature and the hiatuses of theory. After the machine is finished, and the steam turned on, the next is to drive it; and experience and an exquisite sympathy must teach him where a weight should be applied or a nut loosened. With the civil engineer, more properly so called (if anything can be proper with this awkward coinage), the obligation starts with the beginning. He is always the practical man. The rains, the winds and the

waves, the complexity and the fitfulness of nature, are always before him. He has to deal with the unpredictable, with those forces (in Smeaton's phrase) that "are subject to no calculation"; and still he must predict, still calculate them, at his peril. His work is not yet in being, and he must foresee its influence: how it shall deflect the tide, exaggerate the waves, dam back the rain-water, or attract the thunderbolt. He visits a piece of seaboard: and from the inclination and soil of the beach, from the weeds and shell-fish, from the configuration of the coast and the depth of soundings outside, he must induce what magnitude of waves is to be looked for. He visits a river, its summer water babbling on shallows; and he must not only read, in a thousand indications, the measure of winter freshets, but be able to predict the violence of occasional great floods. Nay, and more: he must not only consider that which is, but that which may be. Thus I find my grandfather writing, in a report on the North Esk Bridge: "A less waterway might have sufficed, but *the valleys may come to be meliorated by drainage.*" One field drained after another through all that confluence of vales, and we come to a time when they shall precipitate, by so much a more copious and transient flood, as the gush of the flowing drain-pipe is superior to the leakage of a peat.

It is plain there is here but a restricted use for formulas. In this sort of practise, the engineer has need of some transcendental sense. Smeaton, the pioneer, bade him obey his "feelings"; my father, that "power of estimating obscure forces which supplies a coefficient of its own to every rule." The rules must be everywhere indeed: but they must everywhere be modified by this transcendental coefficient, everywhere bent to the impression of the trained eye and the *feelings* of the engineer. A sentiment of physical laws and of the scale of nature, which shall have been strong in the beginning and progressively fortified by observation must be his guide in the last recourse. I had the most opportunity to observe my father. He would pass hours on the beach brooding over the waves, counting them, noting their least deflection, noting when

they broke. On Tweedside, or by Lyne or Manor, we have spent together whole afternoons; to me, at the time, extremely wearisome; to him, as I am now sorry to think, bitterly mortifying. The river was to me a pretty and various spectacle; I could not see—I could not be made to see—it otherwise. To my father it was a checker-board of lively forces, which he traced from pool to shallow with minute appreciation and enduring interest. "That bank was being undercut," he might say; "why? Suppose you were to put a groin out here, would not the *filum fluminous* be cast abruptly off across the channel? and where would it impinge upon the other shore? and what would be the result? Or suppose you were to blast that boulder, what would happen? Follow it—use the eyes God has given you—can you not see that a great deal of land would be reclaimed upon this side?" It was to me like school in holidays; but to him, until I had worn him out with my invincible triviality, a delight. Thus he pored over the engineer's voluminous handybook of nature; thus must, too, have pored my grandfather and uncles.

But it is of the essence of this knowledge, or this knack of mind, to be largely incommunicable. "It can not be imparted to another," says my father. The verbal casting-net is thrown in vain over these evanescent, inferential relations. Hence the insignificance of much engineering literature. So far as the science can be reduced to formulas or diagrams, the book is to the point; so far as the art depends on intimate study of the ways of nature, the author's words will too often be found vapid. This fact—that engineering looks one way, and literature another —was what my grandfather overlooked. All his life long, his pen was in his hand, piling up a treasury of knowledge, preparing himself against all possible contingencies. Scarce anything fell under his notice but he perceived in it some relation to his work, and chronicled it in the pages of his journal in his always lucid, but sometimes inexact and wordy, style. The Traveling Diary (so he called it) was kept in fascicles of ruled paper, which were at last bound up, rudely indexed, and put by for future reference. Such volumes as have reached me contain a sur-

prising medley: the whole details of his employment in the Northern Lights and his general practise; the whole biography of an enthusiastic engineer. Much of it is useful and curious; much merely otiose; and much can only be described as an attempt to impart that which can not be imparted in words. Of such are his repeated and heroic descriptions of reefs; monuments of misdirected literary energy, which leave upon the mind of the reader no effect but that of a multiplicity of words and the suggested vignette of a lusty old gentleman scrambling among tangle. It is to be remembered that he came to engineering while yet it was in the egg and without a library, and that he saw the bounds of that profession widen daily. He saw iron ships, steamers, and the locomotive engine introduced. He lived to travel from Glasgow to Edinburgh in the inside of a forenoon, and to remember that he himself had "often been twelve hours upon the journey, and his grandfather (Lillie) two days!" The profession was still but in its second generation, and had already broken down the barriers of time and space. Who should set a limit to its future encroachments? And hence, with a kind of sanguine pedantry, he pursued his design of "keeping up with the day" and posting himself and his family on every mortal subject. Of this unpractical idealism we shall meet with many instances; there was not a trade, and scarce an accomplishment, but he thought it should form part of the outfit of an engineer; and not content with keeping an encyclopedic diary himself, he would fain have set all his sons to work continuing and extending it. They were more happily inspired. My father's engineering pocketbook was not a bulky volume; with its store of pregnant notes and vital formulas, it served him through life, and was not yet filled when he came to die. As for Robert Stevenson and the Traveling Diary, I should be ungrateful to complain, for it has supplied me with many lively traits for this and subsequent chapters; but I must still remember much of the period of my study there as a sojourn in the Valley of the Shadow.

The duty of the engineer is twofold—to design the work, and to see the work done. We have seen already

something of the vociferous thoroughness of the man, upon the cleaning of lamps and the polishing of reflectors. In building, in road-making, in the construction of bridges, in every detail and byway of his employments, he pursued the same ideal. Perfection (with a capital P and violently underscored) was his design. A crack for a penknife, the waste of "six-and-thirty shillings," "the loss of a day or a tide," in each of these he saw and was revolted by the finger of the sloven; and to spirits intense as his, and immersed in vital undertakings, the slovenly is the dishonest, and wasted time is instantly translated into lives endangered. On this consistent idealism there is but one thing that now and then trenches with a touch of incongruity, and that is his love of the picturesque. As when he laid out a road on Hogarth's line of beauty; bade a foreman be careful, in quarrying, not "to disfigure the island"; or regretted in a report that "the great stone, called the *Devil in the Hole,* was blasted or broken down to make road-metal, and for other purposes of the work."

CHAPTER III

THE BUILDING OF THE BELL ROCK

OFF the mouths of the Tay and the Forth, thirteen miles from Fifeness, eleven from Arbroath, and fourteen from the Red Head of Angus, lies the Inchcape or Bell Rock. It extends to a length of about fourteen hundred feet, but the part of it discovered at low water to not more than four hundred and twenty-seven. At a little more than half-flood in fine weather the seamless ocean joins over the reef, and at high-water springs it is buried sixteen feet. As the tide goes down, the higher reaches of the hock are seen to be clothed by *Conferva rupestris* as by a sward of grass; upon the more exposed edges, where the currents are most swift and the breach of the sea heaviest, Baderlock or Henware flourishes; and the great Tangle grows at the depth of several fathoms with luxuriance. Before man arrived, and introduced into the silence of the sea the smoke and clangor of a blacksmith's shop, it was a favorite resting-place of seals. The crab and lobster haunt in the crevices; and limpets, mussels, and the white buckie abound.

According to tradition, a bell had been once hung upon this rock by an abbot of Arbroath,[1] "and being taken down by a sea-pirate, a year thereafter he perished upon the same rock, with ship and goods, in the righteous judgment of God." From the days of the abbot and the sea-pirate no man had set foot upon the Inchcape, save fishers from the neighboring coast, or perhaps—for a moment, before

[1] This is, of course, the tradition commemorated by Southey in his ballad of "The Inchcape Bell." Whether true or not, it points to the fact that from the infancy of Scottish navigation the seafaring mind had been fully alive to the perils of this reef. Repeated attempts had been made to mark the place with beacons, but all efforts were unavailing (one such beacon having been carried away within eight days of its erection) until Robert Stevenson conceived and carried out the idea of the stone tower.

the surges swallowed them—the unfortunate victims of shipwreck. The fishers approached the rock with an extreme timidity; but their harvest appears to have been great, and the adventure no more perilous than lucrative. In 1800, on the occasion of my grandfather's first landing, and during the two or three hours which the ebb-tide and the smooth water allowed them to pass upon its shelves, his crew collected upward of two hundredweight of old metal: pieces of a kedge anchor and a cabin stove, crowbars, a hinge and lock of a door, a ship's marking-iron, a piece of a ship's caboose, a soldier's bayonet, a cannon ball, several pieces of money, a shoe-buckle, and the like. Such were the spoils of the Bell Rock. But the number of vessels actually lost upon the reef was as nothing to those that were cast away in fruitless efforts to avoid it. Placed right in the fairway of two navigations, and one of these the entrance to the only harbor of refuge between the Downs and the Moray Firth, it breathed abroad along the whole coast an atmosphere of terror and perplexity; and no ship sailed that part of the North Sea at night, but what the ears of those on board would be strained to catch the roaring of the seas on the Bell Rock.

From 1794 onward, the mind of my grandfather had been exercised with the idea of a light upon this formidable danger. To build a tower on a sea rock, eleven miles from shore, and barely uncovered at low water of neaps, appeared a fascinating enterprise. It was something yet unattempted, unessayed; and even now, after it has been lighted for more than eighty years, it is still an exploit that has never been repeated.[2] My grandfather was, besides, but a young man, of an experience comparatively restricted, and a reputation confined to Scotland; and

[2] The particular event which concentrated Mr. Stevenson's attention on the problem of the Bell Rock was the memorable gale of December, 1799, when, among many other vessels, H.M.S. *York*, a seventy-four gun ship, went down with all hands on board. Shortly after this disaster, Mr. Stevenson made a careful survey, and prepared his models for a stone tower, the idea of which was at first received with pretty general skepticism. Smeaton's Eddystone tower could not be cited as affording a parallel, for there the rock is not submerged even at high water, while the problem of the Bell Rock was to build a tower of masonry on a sunken reef far distant from land, covered at every tide to a depth of twelve feet or more, and having thirty-two fathoms' depth of water within a mile of its eastern edge.

when he prepared his first models, and exhibited them in Merchants' Hall, he can hardly be acquitted of audacity. John Clerk of Eldin stood his friend from the beginning, kept the key of the model room, to which he carried "eminent strangers," and found words of counsel and encouragement beyond price. "Mr. Clerk had been personally known to Smeaton, and used occasionally to speak of him to me," says my grandfather; and again: "I felt regret that I had not the opportunity of a greater range of practise to fit me for such an undertaking; but I was fortified by an expression of my friend Mr. Clerk in one of our conversations. 'This work,' said he, 'is unique, and can be little forwarded by experience of ordinary masonic operations. In this case Smeaton's "Narrative" must be the text-book, and energy and perseverance the pratique.' "

A Bill for the work was introduced into Parliament and lost in the Lords in 1802-3. John Rennie was afterward, at my grandfather's suggestion, called in council, with the style of chief engineer. The precise meaning attached to these words by any of the parties appears irrecoverable. Chief engineer should have full authority, full responsibility, and a proper share of the emoluments; and there were none of these for Rennie. I find in an appendix a paper which resumes the controversy on this subject; and it will be enough to say here that Rennie did not design the Bell Rock, that he did not execute it, and that he was not paid for it.[3] From so much of the correspondence as has come down to me, the acquaintance of this man, eleven

[3] The grounds for the rejection of the Bill by the House of Lords in 1802-3 had been that the extent of coast over which dues were proposed to be levied would be too great. Before going to Parliament again, the Board of Northern Lights, desiring to obtain support and corroboration for Mr. Stevenson's views, consulted first Telford, who was unable to give the matter his attention, and then (on Stevenson's suggestion) Rennie, who concurred in affirming the practicability of a stone tower, and supported the Bill when it came again before Parliament in 1806. Rennie was afterwards appointed by the Commissioners as advising engineer, whom Stevenson might consult in cases of emergency. It seems certain that the title of chief engineer had in this instance no more meaning than the above. Rennie, in point of fact, proposed certain modifications to Stevenson's plans, which the latter did not accept; nevertheless Rennie continued to take a kindly interest in the work, and the two engineers remained in friendly correspondence during its progress. The official view taken by the Board as to the quarter in which lay both the merit and the responsibility of the work may be gathered from a minute of the Commissioners at their first meeting held after Stevenson died; in which they record their

years his senior, and already famous, appears to have been both useful and agreeable to Robert Stevenson. It is amusing to find my grandfather seeking high and low for a brace of pistols which his colleague had lost by the way between Aberdeen and Edinburgh; and writing to Messrs. Dollond, "I have not thought it necessary to trouble Mr. Rennie with this order, but *I beg you will see to get two minutes of him as he passes your door*"—a proposal calculated rather from the latitude of Edinburgh than from London, even in 1807. It is pretty, too, to observe with what affectionate regard Smeaton was held in mind by his immediate successors. "Poor old fellew," writes Rennie to Stevenson, "I hope he will now and then take a peep at us, and inspire you with fortitude and courage to brave all difficulties and dangers to accomplish a work which will, if successful, immortalize you in the annals of fame." The style might be bettered, but the sentiment is charming.

Smeaton was, indeed, the patron saint of the Bell Rock. Undeterred by the sinister fate of Winstanley, he had tackled and solved the problem of the Eddystone; but his solution had not been in all respects perfect. It remained for my grandfather to outdo him in daring, by applying to a tidal rock those principles which had been already justified by the success of the Eddystone, and to perfect the model by more than one exemplary departure. Smeaton had adopted in his floors the principle of the arch; each therefore exercised an outward thrust upon the walls, which must be met and combated by embedded chains. My grandfather's flooring-stones, on the other hand, were flat, made part of the outer wall, and were keyed and dovetailed into a central stone, so as to bind the work together and be positive elements of strength. In 1703 Winstanley still thought it possible to erect his strange pagoda, with its open gallery, its florid scrolls and candlesticks: like a rich man's folly for an ornamental water in a park.

regret "at the death of this zealous, faithful, and able officer, *to whom is due the honor of conceiving and executing the Bell Rock Lighthouse.*" The matter is briefly summed up in the *Life* of Robert Stevenson by his son David Stevenson (A. & C. Black, 1878), and fully discussed, on the basis of official facts and figures, by the same writer in a letter to the *Civil Engineers' and Architects' Journal*, 1862.

Smeaton followed; then Stevenson in his turn corrected such flaws as were left in Smeaton's design; and with his improvements, it is not too much to say that the model was perfect. Smeaton and Stevenson had between them evolved and finished the sea-tower. No subsequent builder has departed in anything essential from the principles of their design. It remains, and it seems to us as though it must remain for ever, an ideal attained. Every stone in the building, it may interest the reader to know, my grandfather had himself cut out in the model; and the manner in which the courses were fitted, joggled, trenailed, wedged, and the bond broken, is intricate as a puzzle and beautiful by ingenuity.

In 1806 a second Bill passed both Houses, and the preliminary works were at once begun. The same year the Navy had taken a great harvest of prizes in the North Sea, one of which, a Prussian fishing dogger, flat-bottomed and rounded at the stem and stern, was purchased to be a floating lightship, and renamed the *Pharos*. By July 1807 she was overhauled, rigged for her new purpose, and turned into the lee of the Isle of May. "It was proposed that the whole party should meet in her and pass the night; but she rolled from side to side in so extraordinary a manner that even the most sea-hardy fled. It was humorously observed of this vessel that she was in danger of making a round turn and appearing with her keel uppermost; and that she would even turn a halfpenny if laid upon deck." By two o'clock on the morning of the 15th July this purgatorial vessel was moored by the Bell Rock.

A sloop of forty tons had been in the mean time built at Leith, and named the *Smeaton;* by the 7th of August my grandfather set sail in her—

"carrying with him Mr. Peter Logan, foreman builder, and five artificers selected from their having been somewhat accustomed to the sea, the writer being aware of the distressing trial which the floating light would necessarily inflict upon landsmen from her rolling motion. Here he remained till the 10th, and, as the weather was favorable, a landing was effected daily, when the workmen were employed in cutting the large seaweed from the sites of the lighthouse and beacon, which were respectively traced with pickaxes upon the rock. In the mean time

the crew of the *Smeaton* was employed in laying down the several sets of moorings within about half a mile of the rock for the convenience of vessels. The artificers, having, fortunately, experienced moderate weather, returned to the workyard of Arbroath with a good report of their treatment afloat; when their comrades ashore began to feel some anxiety to see a place of which they had heard so much, and to change the constant operations with the iron and mallet in the process of hewing for an occasional tide's work on the rock, which they figured to themselves as a state of comparative ease and comfort."

I am now for many pages to let my grandfather speak for himself, and tell in his own words the story of his capital achievement. The tall quarto of 533 pages from which the following narrative has been dug out is practically unknown to the general reader, yet good judges have perceived its merit, and it has been named (with flattering wit) "The Romance of Stone and Lime" and "The Robinson Crusoe of Civil Engineering." The tower was but four years in the building; it took Robert Stevenson, in the midst of his many avocations, no less than fourteen years to prepare the *Account*. The title-page is a solid piece of literature of upward of a hundred words; the table of contents runs to thirteen pages; and the dedication (to that revered monarch, George IV) must have cost him no little study and correspondence. Walter Scott was called in council, and offered one miscorrection which still blots the page. In spite of all this pondering and filing, there remain pages not easy to construe, and inconsistencies not easy to explain away. I have sought to make these disappear, and to lighten a little the baggage with which my grandfather marches; here and there I have rejoined and rearranged a sentence, always in his own words, and all with a reverent and faithful hand; and I offer here to the reader the true monument of Robert Stevenson with a little of the moss removed from the inscription, and the Portrait of the artist with some superfluous canvas cut away.

I

OPERATIONS OF 1807

Sunday, 16th Aug.—Everything being arranged for sailing to the rock on Saturday the 15th, the vessel might have proceeded on the Sunday; but understanding that this would not be so agreeable to the artificers it was deferred until Monday. Here we can not help observing that the men allotted for the operations at the rock seemed to enter upon the undertaking with a degree of consideration which fully marked their opinion as to the hazardous nature of the undertaking on which they were about to enter. They went in a body to church on Sunday, and whether it was in the ordinary course, or designed for the occasion, the writer is not certain, but the service was, in many respects, suitable to their circumstances.

Monday, 17th Aug.—The tide happening to fall late in the evening of Monday the 17th, the party, counting twenty-four in number, embarked on board of the *Smeaton* about ten o'clock P. M., and sailed from Arbroath with a gentle breeze at west. Our ship's colors having been flying all day in compliment to the commencement of the work, the other vessels in the harbor also saluted, which made a very gay appearance. A number of the friends and acquaintances of those on board having been thus collected, the piers, though at a late hour, were perfectly crowded, and, just as the *Smeaton* cleared the harbor, all on board united in giving three hearty cheers, which were returned by those on shore in such good earnest, that, in the still of the evening, the sound must have been heard in all parts of the town, reechoing from the walls and lofty turrets of the venerable Abbey of Aberbrothwick. The writer felt much satisfaction at the manner of this parting scene, though he must own that the present rejoicing was, on his part, mingled with occasional reflections upon the responsibility of his situation, which extended to the safety of all who should be engaged in this perilous work. With such sensations he retired to his cabin; but, as the artificers were

rather inclined to move about the deck than to remain in their confined berths below, his repose was transient, and the vessel being small every motion was necessarily heard. Some who were musically inclined occasionally sung; but he listened with peculiar pleasure to the sailor at the helm, who hummed over Dibdin's characteristic air:

> "They say there's a Providence sits up aloft,
> To keep watch for the life of poor Jack."

Tuesday, 18th Aug.—The weather had been very gentle all night, and, about four in the morning of the 18th, the *Smeaton* anchored. Agreeably to an arranged plan of operations, all hands were called at five o'clock A. M., just as the highest part of the Bell Rock began to show its sable head among the light breakers, which occasionally whitened with the foaming sea. The two boats belonging to the floating light attended the *Smeaton,* to carry the artificers to the rock, as her boat could only accommodate about six or eight sitters. Every one was more eager than his neighbor to leap into the boats, and it required a good deal of management on the part of the coxswain to get men unaccustomed to a boat to take their places for rowing and at the same time trimming her properly. The landing-master and foreman went into one boat, while the writer took charge of another, and steered it to and from the rock. This became the more necessary in the early stages of the work, as places could not be spared for more than two, or at most three, seamen to each boat, who were always stationed, one at the bow, to use the boat-hook in fending or pushing off, and the other at the aftermost oar, to give the proper time in rowing, while the middle oars were double-banked, and rowed by the artificers.

As the weather was extremely fine, with light airs of wind from the east, we landed without difficulty upon the central part of the rock at half-past five, but the water had not yet sufficiently left it for commencing the work. This interval, however, did not pass unoccupied. The first and last of all the principal operations at the Bell Rock were accompanied by three hearty cheers from all hands, and, on occasions like the present, the steward of the ship

attended, when each man was regaled with a glass of rum. As the water left the rock about six, some began to bore the holes for the great bats or holdfasts, for fixing the beams of the Beacon-house, while the smith was fully attended in laying out the site of his forge, upon a somewhat sheltered spot of the rock, which also recommended itself from the vicinity of a pool of water for tempering his irons. These preliminary steps occupied about an hour, and, as nothing further could be done during this tide toward fixing the forge, the workmen gratified their curiosity by roaming about the rock, which they investigated with great eagerness till the tide overflowed it. Those who had been sick picked dulse (*Fucus palmatus*), which they ate with much seeming appetite; others were more intent upon collecting limpets for bait, to enjoy the amusement of fishing when they returned on board of the vessel.

Indeed, none came away empty-handed, as everything found upon the Bell Rock was considered valuable, being connected with some interesting association. Several coins, and numerous bits of shipwrecked iron, were picked up, of almost every description; and, in particular, a marking-iron lettered JAMES—a circumstance of which it was thought proper to give notice to the public, as it might lead to the knowledge of some unfortunate shipwreck, perhaps unheard of till this simple occurrence led to the discovery. When the rock began to be overflowed, the landing-master arranged the crews of the respective boats, appointing twelve persons to each. According to a rule which the writer had laid down to himself, he was always the last person who left the rock.

In a short time the Bell Rock was laid completely under water, and the weather being extremely fine, the sea was so smooth that its place could not be pointed out from the appearance of the surface—a circumstance which sufficiently demonstrates the dangerous nature of this rock, even during the day, and in the smoothest and calmest state of the sea. During the interval between the morning and the evening tides, the artificers were variously employed in fishing and reading; others were busy in drying and ad-

justing their wet clothes, and one or two amused their companions with the violin and German flute.

About seven in the evening the signal bell for landing on the rock was again rung, when every man was at his quarters. In this service it was thought more appropriate to use the bell than to *pipe* to quarters, as the use of this instrument is less known to the mechanic than the sound of the bell. The landing, as in the morning, was at the eastern harbor. During this tide the seaweed was pretty well cleared from the site of the operations, and also from the tracks leading to the different landing-places; for walking upon the rugged surface of the Bell Rock, when covered with seaweed, was found to be extremely difficult, and even dangerous. Every hand that could possibly be occupied was now employed in assisting the smith to fit up the apparatus for his forge. At 9 P. M. the boats returned to the tender, after another two hours' work, in the same order as formerly—perhaps as much gratified with the success that attended the work of this day as with any other in the whole course of the operations. Although it could not be said that the fatigues of this day had been great, yet all on board retired early to rest. The sea being calm, and no movement on deck, it was pretty generally remarked in the morning that the bell awakened the greater number on board from their first sleep; and, though this observation was not altogether applicable to the writer himself, yet he was not a little pleased to find that thirty people could all at once become so reconciled to a night's quarters within a few hundred paces of the Bell Rock.

Wednesday, 19th Aug.—Being extremely anxious at this time to get forward with fixing the smith's forge, on which the progress of the work at present depended, the writer requested that he might be called at daybreak to learn the landing-master's opinion of the weather from the appearance of the rising sun, a criterion by which experienced seamen can generally judge pretty accurately of the state of the weather for the following day. About five o'clock, on coming upon deck, the sun's upper limb or disk had just begun to appear as if rising from the ocean, and in less than a minute he was seen in the

fullest splendor; but after a short interval he was enveloped in a soft cloudy sky, which was considered emblematical of fine weather. His rays had not yet sufficiently dispelled the clouds which hid the land from view, and the Bell Rock being still overflowed, the whole was one expanse of water. This scene in itself was highly gratifying; and, when the morning bell was tolled, we were gratified with the happy forebodings of good weather and the expectation of having both a morning and an evening's tide on the rock.

The boat which the writer steered happened to be the last which approached the rock at this tide; and, in standing up in the stern, while at some distance, to see how the leading boat entered the creek, he was astonished to observe something in the form of a human figure, in a reclining posture, upon one of the ledges of the rock. He immediately steered the boat through a narrow entrance to the eastern harbor, with a thousand unpleasant sensations in his mind. He thought a vessel or boat must have been wrecked upon the rock during the night; and it seemed probable that the rock might be strewed with dead bodies, a spectacle which could not fail to deter the artificers from returning so freely to their work. In the midst of these reveries the boat took the ground at an improper landing-place, but, without waiting to push her off, he leaped upon the rock, and making his way hastily to the spot which had privately given him alarm, he had the satisfaction to ascertain that he had only been deceived by the peculiar situation and aspect of the smith's anvil and block, which very completely represented the appearance of a lifeless body upon the rock. The writer carefully suppressed his feelings, the simple mention of which might have had a bad effect upon the artificers, and his haste passed for an anxiety to examine the apparatus of the smith's forge, left in an unfinished state at evening tide.

In the course of this morning's work two or three apparently distant peals of thunder were heard, and the atmosphere suddenly became thick and foggy. But as the *Smeaton*, our present tender, was moored at no great dis-

tance from the rock, the crew on board continued blowing with a horn, and occasionally fired a musket, so that the boats got to the ship without difficulty.

Thursday, 20th Aug.—The wind this morning inclined from the northeast, and the sky had a heavy and cloudy appearance, but the sea was smooth, though there was an undulating motion on the surface, which indicated easterly winds, and occasioned a slight surf upon the rock. But the boats found no difficulty in landing at the western creek at half-past seven, and, after a good tide's work, left it again about a quarter from eleven. In the evening the artificers landed at half-past seven, and continued till half-past eight, having completed the fixing of the smith's forge, his vise, and a wooden board or bench, which were also batted to a ledge of the rock, to the great joy of all, under a salute of three hearty cheers. From an oversight on the part of the smith, who had neglected to bring his tinder-box and matches from the vessel, the work was prevented from being continued for at least an hour longer.

The smith's shop was, of course, in *open space:* the large bellows were carried to and from the rock every tide, for the serviceable condition of which, together with the tinder-box, fuel, and embers of the former fire, the smith was held responsible. Those who have been placed in situations to feel the inconveniency and want of this useful artizan, will be able to appreciate his value in a case like the present. It often happened, to our annoyance and disappointment, in the early state of the work, when the smith was in the middle of a *favorite heat* in making some useful article, or in sharpening the tools, after the flood-tide had obliged the pickmen to strike work, a sea would come rolling over the rocks, dash out the fire, and endanger his indispensable implement, the bellows. If the sea was smooth, while the smith often stood at work knee-deep in water, the tide rose by imperceptible degrees, first cooling the exterior of the fireplace, or hearth, and then quietly blackening and extinguishing the fire from below. The writer has frequently been amused at the perplexing anxiety of the blacksmith when coaxing his fire and endeavoring to avert the effects of the rising tide.

Friday, 21st Aug.—Everything connected with the forge being now completed, the artificers found no want of sharp tools, and the work went forward with great alacrity and spirit. It was also alleged that the rock had a more habitable appearance from the volumes of smoke which ascended from the smith's shop and the busy noise of his anvil, the operations of the masons, the movements of the boats, and shipping at a distance—all contributed to give life and activity to the scene. The noise and traffic had, however, the effect of almost completely banishing the herd of seals which had hitherto frequented the rock as a resting-place during the period of low water. The rock seemed to be peculiarly adapted to their habits, for, excepting two or three days at neap-tides, a part of it always dries at low water—at least, during the summer season—and as there was good fishing-ground in the neighborhood, without a human being to disturb or molest them, it had become a very favorite residence of these amphibious animals, the writer having occasionally counted from fifty to sixty playing about the rock at a time. But when they came to be disturbed every tide, and their seclusion was broken in upon by the kindling of great fires, together with the beating of hammers and picks during low water, after hovering about for a time, they changed their place, and seldom more than one or two were to be seen about the rock upon the more detached outlayers which dry partially, whence they seemed to look with that sort of curiosity which is observable in these animals when following a boat.

Saturday, 22d Aug.—Hitherto the artificers had remained on board of the *Smeaton*, which was made fast to one of the mooring buoys at a distance only of about a quarter of a mile from the rock, and, of course, a very great convenience to the work. Being so near, the seamen could never be mistaken as to the progress of the tide, or state of the sea upon the rock, nor could the boats be much at a loss to pull on board of the vessel during fog, or even in very rough weather; as she could be cast loose from her moorings at pleasure, and brought to the lee side of the rock. But the *Smeaton* being only about forty

register tons, her accommodations were extremely limited. It may, therefore, be easily imagined that an addition of twenty-four persons to her own crew must have rendered the situation of those on board rather uncomfortable. The only place for the men's hammocks on board being in the hold, they were unavoidably much crowded; and if the weather had required the hatches to be fastened down, so great a number of men could not possibly have been accommodated. To add to this evil, the caboose or cooking-place being upon deck, it would not have been possible to have cooked for so large a company in the event of bad weather.

The stock of water was now getting short, and some necessaries being also wanted for the floating light, the *Smeaton* was despatched for Arbroath; and the writer, with the artificers, at the same time shifted their quarters from her to the floating light.

Although the rock barely made its appearance at this period of the tides till eight o'clock, yet, having now a full mile to row from the floating light to the rock, instead of about a quarter of a mile from the moorings of the *Smeaton,* it was necessary to be earlier astir, and to form different arrangements; breakfast was accordingly served up at seven o'clock this morning. From the excessive motion of the floating light, the writer had looked forward rather with anxiety to the removal of the workmen to this ship. Some among them, who had been congratulating themselves upon having become sea-hardy while on board of the *Smeaton,* had complete relapse on returning to the floating light. This was the case with the writer. From the spacious and convenient berthage of the floating light, the exchange to the artificers was, in this respect, much for the better. The boats were also commodious, measuring sixteen feet in length on the keel, so that, in fine weather, their complement of sitters was sixteen persons for each, with which, however, they were rather crowded, but she could not stow two boats of larger dimensions. When there was what is called a breeze of wind, and a swell in the sea, the proper number for each boat could not, with propriety, be rated at more than twelve persons.

When the tide-bell rung the boats were hoisted out, and two active seamen were employed to keep them from receiving damage alongside. The floating light being very buoyant, was so quick in her motions that when those who were about to step from her gunwale into a boat, placed themselves upon a cleat or step on the ship's side, with the man or rail ropes in their hands, they had often to wait for some time till a favorable opportunity occurred for stepping into the boat. While in this situation, with the vessel rolling from side to side, watching the proper time for letting go the man-ropes, it required the greatest dexterity and presence of mind to leap into the boats. One who was rather awkward would often wait a considerable period in this position: at one time his side of the ship would be so depressed that he would touch the boat to which he belonged, while the next sea would elevate him so much that he would see his comrades in the boat on the opposite side of the ship, his friends in the one boat calling him to "Jump," while those in the boat on the other side, as he came again and again into their view, would jocosely say, "Are you there yet? You seem to enjoy a swing." In this situation it was common to see a person upon each side of the ship for a length of time, waiting to quit his hold.

On leaving the rock to-day a trial of seamanship was proposed among the rowers, for by this time the artificers had become tolerably expert in this exercise. By inadvertence some of the oars provided had been made of fir instead of ash, and although a considerable stock had been laid in, the workmen, being at first awkward in the art, were constantly breaking their oars; indeed it was no uncommon thing to see the broken blades of a pair of oars floating astern, in the course of a passage from the rock to the vessel. The men, upon the whole, had but little work to perform in the course of a day; for though they exerted themselves extremely hard while on the rock, yet, in the early state of the operations, this could not be continued for more than three or four hours at a time, and as their rations were large—consisting of one pound and a half of beef, one pound of ship biscuit, eight ounces

oatmeal, two ounces barley, two ounces butter, three quarts of small beer, with vegetables and salt—they got into excellent spirits when free from sea-sickness. The rowing of the boats against each other became a favorite amusement, which was rather a fortunate circumstance, as it must have been attended with much inconvenience had it been found necessary to employ a sufficient number of sailors for this purpose. The writer, therefore, encouraged this spirit of emulation, and the speed of their respective boats became a favorite topic. Premiums for boat races were instituted, which were contended for with great eagerness, and the respective crews kept their stations in the boats with as much precision as they kept their beds on board of the ship. With these and other pastimes, when the weather was favorable, the time passed away among the inmates of the forecastle and waist of the ship. The writer looks back with interest upon the hours of solitude which he spent in this lonely ship with his small library.

This being the first Saturday that the artificers were afloat, all hands were served with a glass of rum and water at night, to drink the sailors' favorite toast of "Wives and Sweethearts." It was customary, upon these occasions, for the seamen and artificers to collect in the galley, when the musical instruments were put in requisition: for, according to invariable practise, every man must play a tune, sing a song, or tell a story.

Sunday, 23d Aug.—Having, on the previous evening, arranged matters with the landing-master as to the business of the day, the signal was rung for all hands at half-past seven this morning. In the early state of the spring-tides the artificers went to the rock before breakfast, but as the tides fell later in the day, it became necessary to take this meal before leaving the ship. At eight o'clock all hands were assembled on the quarter-deck for prayers, a solemnity which was gone through in as orderly a manner as circumstances would admit. When the weather permitted, the flags of the ship were hung up as an awning or screen, forming the quarter-deck into a distinct compartment; the pendant was also hoisted at the

mainmast, and a large ensign flag was displayed over the stern; and lastly, the ship's companion, or top of the staircase, was covered with the *flag proper* of the Lighthouse Service, on which the Bible was laid. A particular toll of the bell called all hands to the quarter-deck, when the writer read a chapter of the Bible, and, the whole ship's company being uncovered, he also read the impressive prayer composed by the Reverend Dr. Brunton, one of the ministers of Edinburgh.

Upon concluding this service, which was attended with becoming reverence and attention, all on board retired to their respective berths to breakfast, and, at half-past nine, the bell again rung for the artificers to take their stations in their respective boats. Some demur having been evinced on board about the propriety of working on Sunday, which had hitherto been touched upon as delicately as possible, all hands being called aft, the writer, from the quarter-deck, stated generally the nature of the service, expressing his hopes that every man would feel himself called upon to consider the erection of a lighthouse on the Bell Rock, in every point of view, as a work of necessity and mercy. He knew that scruples had existed with some, and these had, indeed, been fairly and candidly urged before leaving the shore; but it was expected that, after having seen the critical nature of the rock, and the necessity of the measure, every man would now be satisfied of the propriety of embracing all opportunities of landing on the rock when the state of the weather would permit. The writer further took them to witness that it did not proceed from want of respect for the appointments and established forms of religion that he had himself adopted the resolution of attending the Bell Rock works on the Sunday; but, as he hoped, from a conviction that it was his bounden duty, on the strictest principles of morality. At the same time it was intimated that, if any were of a different opinion, they should be perfectly at liberty to hold their sentiments without the imputation of contumacy or disobedience; the only difference would be in regard to the pay.

Upon stating this much, he stepped into his boat, re-

questing all who were so disposed to follow him. The sailors, from their habits, found no scruple on this subject, and all of the artificers, though a little tardy, also embarked, excepting four of the masons, who, from the beginning, mentioned that they would decline working on Sundays. It may here be noticed that throughout the whole of the operations it was observable that the men wrought, if possible, with more keenness upon the Sundays than at other times, from an impression that they were engaged in a work of imperious necessity, which required every possible exertion. On returning to the floating light, after finishing the tide's work, the boats were received by the part of the ship's crew left on board with the usual attention of handing ropes to the boats and helping the artificers on board; but the four masons who had absented themselves from the work did not appear upon deck.

The boats left the floating light at a quarter-past nine o'clock this morning, and the work began at three-quarters past nine; but as the neap-tides were approaching the working time at the rock became gradually shorter, and it was now with difficulty that two and a half hours' work could be got. But so keenly had the workmen entered into the spirit of the Beacon-house operations, that they continued to bore the holes in the rock till some of them were knee-deep in water.

Monday, 24th Aug.—The operations at this time were entirely directed to the erection of the beacon, in which every man felt an equal interest, as at this critical period the slightest casualty to any of the boats at the rock might have been fatal to himself individually, while it was perhaps peculiar to the writer more immediately to feel for the safety of the whole. Each log or upright beam of the beacon was to be fixed to the rock by two strong and massive bats or stanchions of iron. These bats, for the fixture of the principal and diagonal beams and bracing chains, required fifty-four holes, each measuring two inches in diameter, and eighteen inches in depth. There had already been so considerable a progress made in boring and excavating the holes that the writer's hopes of getting the beacon

erected this year began to be more and more confirmed, although it was now advancing toward what was considered the latter end of the proper working season at the Bell Rock. The foreman joiner, Mr. Francis Watt, was accordingly appointed to attend at the rock to-day, when the necessary levels were taken for the step or seat of each particular beam of the beacon, that they might be cut to their respective lengths, to suit the inequalities of the rock; several of the stanchions were also tried into their places, and other necessary observations made, to prevent mistakes on the application of the apparatus, and to facilitate the operations when the beams came to be set up, which would require to be done in the course of a single tide.

Tuesday, 25th Aug.—We had now experienced an almost unvaried tract of light airs of easterly wind, with clear weather in the forepart of the day, and fog in the evenings. To-day, however, it sensibly changed; when the wind came to the southwest, and blew a fresh breeze. At nine A. M. the bell rung, and the boats were hoisted out, and though the artificers were now pretty well accustomed to tripping up and down the sides of the floating light, yet it required more seamanship this morning than usual. It therefore afforded some merriment to those who had got fairly seated in their respective boats to see the difficulties which attended their companions, and the hesitating manner in which they quitted hold of the man-ropes in leaving the ship. The passage to the rock was tedious, and the boats did not reach it till half-past ten.

It being now the period of neap-tides, the water only partially left the rock and some of the men who were boring on the lower ledges of the site of the beacon stood knee-deep in water.

The situation of the smith to-day was particularly disagreeable, but his services were at all times indispensable. As the tide did not leave the site of the forge, he stood in the water, and as there was some roughness on the surface it was with considerable difficulty that, with the assistance of the sailors, he was enabled to preserve alive his fire; and, while his feet were immersed in water, his face was not only scorched, but continually exposed to volumes of

smoke, accompanied with sparks from the fire, which were occasionally set up owing to the strength and direction of the wind.

Wednesday, 26th Aug.—The wind had shifted this morning to N.N.W., with rain, and was blowing what sailors call a fresh breeze. To speak, perhaps, somewhat more intelligibly, to the general reader, the wind was such that a fishing-boat could just carry full sail. But as it was of importance, specially in the outset of the business, to keep up the spirit of enterprise for landing on all practical occasions, the writer, after consulting with the landing master, ordered the bell to be rung for embarking, and at half-past eleven the boats reached the rock, and left it again at a quarter-past twelve, without, however, being able to do much work, as the smith could not be set to work from the smallness of the ebb and the strong breach of sea, which lashed with great force among the bars of the forge.

Just as we were about to leave the rock the wind shifted to the S.W., and, from a fresh gale, it became what seamen term a hard gale, or such as would have required the fisherman to take in two or three reefs in his sail. It is a curious fact that the respective tides of ebb and flood are apparent upon the shore about an hour and a half sooner than at the distance of three or four miles in the offing. But what seems chiefly interesting here is that the tides around this small sunken rock should follow exactly the same laws as on the extensive shores of the mainland. When the boats left the Bell Rock to-day it was overflowed by the flood-tide, but the floating light did not swing round to the flood-tide for more than an hour afterward. Under this disadvantage the boats had to struggle with the ebb-tide and a hard gale of wind, so that it was with the greatest difficulty they reached the floating light. Had this gale happened in spring-tides when the current was strong we must have been driven to sea in a very helpless condition.

The boat which the writer steered was considerably behind the other, one of the masons having unluckily broken his oar. Our prospect of getting on board, of course,

became doubtful, and our situation was rather perilous, as the boat shipped so much sea that it occupied two of the artificers to bale and clear her of water. When the oar gave way we were about half a mile from the ship, but, being fortunately to windward, we got into the wake of the floating light, at about 250 fathoms astern, just as the landing-master's boat reached the vessel. He immediately streamed or floated a life-buoy astern, with a line which was always in readiness, and by means of this useful implement the boat was towed alongside of the floating light, where, from her rolling motion, it required no small management to get safely on board, as the men were much worn out with their exertions in pulling from the rock. On the present occasion the crews of both boats were completely drenched with spray, and those who sat upon the bottom of the boats to bale them were sometimes pretty deep in the water before it could be cleared out. After getting on board, all hands were allowed an extra dram, and, having shifted and got a warm and comfortable dinner, the affair, it is believed, was little more thought of.

Thursday, 27th Aug.—The tides were now in that state which sailors term the dead of the neap, and it was not expected that any part of the rock would be seen above water to-day; at any rate, it was obvious, from the experience of yesterday, that no work could be done upon it, and therefore the artificers were not required to land. The wind was at west, with light breezes, and fine clear weather; and as it was an object with the writer to know the actual state of the Bell Rock at neap-tides, he got one of the boats manned, and, being accompanied by the landing-master, went to it at a quarter-past twelve. The parts of the rock that appeared above water being very trifling, were covered by every wave, so that no landing was made. Upon trying the depth of water with a boat-hook, particularly on the sites of the lighthouse and beacon, on the former, at low water, the depth was found to be three feet, and on the central parts of the latter it was ascertained to be two feet eight inches. Having made these remarks, the boat returned to the ship at two P. M.,

and the weather being good, the artificers were found amusing themselves with fishing. The *Smeaton* came from Arbroath this afternoon, and made fast to her moorings, having brought letters and newspapers, with parcels of clean linen, etc., for the workmen, who were also made happy by the arrival of three of their comrades from the workyard ashore. From these men they not only received all the news of the workyard, but seemed themselves to enjoy great pleasure in communicating whatever they considered to be interesting with regard to the rock. Some also got letters from their friends at a distance, the postage of which for the men afloat was always free, so that they corresponded the more readily.

The site of the building having already been carefully traced out with the pick-ax, the artificers this day commenced the excavation of the rock for the foundation or first course of the lighthouse. Four men only were employed at this work, while twelve continued at the site of the beacon-house, at which every possible opportunity was embraced, till this essential part of the operations should be completed.

Wednesday, 2d Sept.—The floating light's bell rung this morning at half-past four o'clock, as a signal for the boats to be got ready, and the landing took place at half-past five. In passing the *Smeaton* at her moorings near the rock, her boat followed with eight additional artificers who had come from Arbroath with her at last trip, but there being no room for them in the floating light's boats, they had continued on board. The weather did not look very promising in the morning, the wind blowing pretty fresh from W.S.W.: and had it not been that the writer calculated upon having a vessel so much at command, in all probability he would not have ventured to land. The *Smeaton* rode at what sailors call a *salvagee*, with a cross-head made fast to the floating buoy. This kind of attachment was found to be more convenient than the mode of passing the hawser through the ring of the buoy when the vessel was to be made fast. She had then only to be steered very close to the buoy, when the salvagee was laid hold of with a boat-hook, and the bight of the hawser

thrown over the cross-head. But the salvagee, by this method, was always left at the buoy, and was, of course, more liable to chafe and wear than a hawser passed through the ring, which could be wattled with canvas, and shifted at pleasure. The salvagee and cross method is, however, much practised; but the experience of this morning showed it to be very unsuitable for vessels riding in an exposed situation for any length of time.

Soon after the artificers landed they commenced work; but the wind coming to blow hard, the *Smeaton's* boat and crew, who had brought their complement of eight men to the rock, went off to examine her riding ropes, and see that they were in proper order. The boat had no sooner reached the vessel than she went adrift, carrying the boat along with her. By the time that she was got round to make a tack toward the rock, she had drifted at least three miles to leeward, with the praam-boat astern; and, having both the wind and a tide against her, the writer perceived, with no little anxiety, that she could not possibly return to the rock till long after its being overflowed; for, owing to the anomaly of the tides formerly noticed, the Bell Rock is completely under water when the ebb abates to the offing.

In this perilous predicament, indeed, he found himself placed between hope and despair—but certainly the latter was by much the most predominant feeling of his mind—situate upon a sunken rock in the middle of the ocean, which, in the progress of the flood-tide, was to be laid under water to the depth of at least twelve feet in a stormy sea. There were this morning thirty-two persons in all upon the rock, with only two boats, whose complement, even in good weather, did not exceed twenty-four sitters; but to row to the floating light with so much wind, and in so heavy a sea, a complement of eight men for each boat was as much as could, with propriety, be attempted, so that, in this way, about one-half of our number was unprovided for. Under these circumstances, had the writer ventured to despatch one of the boats in expectation of either working the *Smeaton* sooner up toward the rock, or in hopes of getting her boat brought to our

assistance, this must have given an immediate alarm to the artificers, each of whom would have insisted upon taking to his own boat, and leaving the eight artificers belonging to the *Smeaton* to their chance. Of course a scuffle might have ensued, and it is hard to say, in the ardor of men contending for life, where it might have ended. It has even been hinted to the writer that a party of the *pickmen* were determined to keep exclusively to their own boat against all hazards.

The unfortunate circumstance of the *Smeaton* and her boat having drifted was, for a considerable time, only known to the writer and to the landing-master, who removed to the farther point of the rock, where he kept his eye steadily upon the progress of the vessel. While the artificers were at work, chiefly in sitting or kneeling postures, excavating the rock, or boring with the jumpers, and while their numerous hammers, with the sound of the smith's anvil, continued, the situation of things did not appear so awful. In this state of suspense, with almost certain destruction at hand, the water began to rise upon those who were at work on the lower parts of the sites of the beacon and lighthouse. From the run of sea upon the rock, the forge fire was also sooner extinguished this morning than usual, and the volumes of smoke having ceased, objects in every direction became visible from all parts of the rock. After having had about three hours' work, the men began, pretty generally, to make toward their respective boats for their jackets and stockings, when, to their astonishment, instead of three, they found only two boats, the third being adrift with the *Smeaton*. Not a word was uttered by any one, but all appeared to be silently calculating their numbers, and looking to each other with evident marks of perplexity depicted in their countenances. The landing-master, conceiving that blame might be attached to him, for allowing the boat to leave the rock, still kept at a distance. At this critical moment the author was standing upon an elevated part of Smith's Ledge, where he endeavored to mark the progress of the *Smeaton,* not a little surprised that her crew did not cut the praam adrift, which greatly retarded her way, and amazed that

some effort was not making to bring at least the boat, and attempt our relief. The workmen looked steadfastly upon the writer, and turned occasionally toward the vessel, still far to leeward.[1] All this passed in the most perfect silence, and the melancholy solemnity of the group made an impression never to be effaced from his mind.

The writer had all along been considering of various schemes—providing the men could be kept under command—which might be put in practise for the general safety, in hopes that the *Smeaton* might be able to pick up the boats to leeward, when they were obliged to leave the rock. He was, accordingly, about to address the artificers on the perilous nature of their circumstances, and to propose that all hands should unstrip their upper clothing when the higher parts of the rock were laid under water; that the seamen should remove every unnecessary weight and encumbrance from the boats; that a specified number of men should go into each boat, and that the remainder should hang by the gunwales, while the boats were to be rowed gently toward the *Smeaton,* as the course to the *Pharos,* or floating light, lay rather to windward of the rock. But when he attempted to speak his mouth was so parched that his tongue refused utterance, and he now learned by experience that the saliva is as necessary as the tongue itself for speech. He turned to one of the pools on the rock and lapped a little water, which produced immediate relief. But what was his happiness, when on rising from this unpleasant beverage, some one called out, "A boat! a boat!" and, on looking around, at no great distance, a large boat was seen through the haze making toward the rock. This at once enlivened and rejoiced every heart. The timeous visitor proved to be James Spink, the Bell Rock pilot, who had come express from Arbroath with letters. Spink had for some time seen the *Smeaton,* and had even supposed, from the state of the weather, that all hands were on board of her till he approached more nearly and observed people upon the rock; but not supposing that the assistance of his boat was neces-

[1] "Nothing was said, but I was *looked out of countenance,*" he says in a letter.

sary to carry the artificers off the rock, he anchored on the lee-side and began to fish, waiting, as usual, till the letters were sent for, as the pilot-boat was too large and unwieldy for approaching the rock when there was any roughness or run of the sea at the entrance of the landing creeks.

Upon this fortunate change of circumstances, sixteen of the artificers were sent, at two trips, in one of the boats, with instructions for Spink to proceed with them to the floating light. This being accomplished, the remaining sixteen followed in the two boats belonging to the service of the rock. Every one felt the most perfect happiness at leaving Bell Rock this morning, though a very hard and even dangerous passage to the floating light still awaited us, as the wind by this time had increased to a pretty hard gale, accompanied with a considerable swell of sea. Every one was as completely drenched in water as if he had been dragged astern of the boats. The writer, in particular, being at the helm, found, on getting on board, that his face and ears were completely coated with a thin film of salt from the sea spray, which broke constantly over the bows of the boat. After much baling of water and severe work at the oars, the three boats reached the floating light, where some new difficulties occurred in getting on board in safety, owing partly to the exhausted state of the men, and partly to the violent rolling of the vessel.

As the tide flowed, it was expected that the *Smeaton* would have got to windward; but, seeing that all was safe, after tacking for several hours and making little progress, she bore away for Arbroath, with the praam-boat. As there was now too much wind for the pilot-boat to return to Arbroath, she was made fast astern of the floating light, and the crew remained on board till next day, when the weather moderated. There can be very little doubt that the appearance of James Spink with his boat on this critical occasion was the means of preventing the loss of lives at the rock this morning. When these circumstances, some years afterward, came to the knowledge of the Board, a small pension was ordered to our faithful pilot,

then in his seventieth year; and he still continues to wear the uniform clothes and badge of the Lighthouse service. Spink is a remarkably strong man, whose *tout ensemble* is highly characteristic of a North country fisherman. He usually dresses in a pea-jacket cut after a particular fashion, and wears a large, flat, blue bonnet. A striking likeness of Spink in his pilot-dress, with the badge or insignia on his left arm which is characteristic of the boatmen in the service of the Northern Lights, has been taken by Howe, and is in the writer's possession.

Thursday, 3d Sept.—The bell rung this morning at five o'clock, but the writer must acknowledge, from the circumstances of yesterday, that its sound was extremely unwelcome. This appears also to have been the feelings of the artificers, for when they came to be mustered, out of twenty-six, only eight, besides the foreman and seamen, appeared upon deck to accompany the writer to the rock. Such are the baneful effects of anything like misfortune or accident connected with a work of this description. The use of argument to persuade the men to embark in cases of this kind would have been out of place, as it is not only discomfort, or even the risk of the loss of a limb, but life itself that becomes the question. The boats, notwithstanding the thinness of our ranks, left the vessel at half-past five. The rough weather of yesterday having proved but a summer's gale, the wind came to-day in gentle breezes; yet, the atmosphere being cloudy, it had not a very favorable appearance. The boats reached the rock at six A. M., and the eight artificers who landed were employed in clearing out the bat-holes for the beacon-house, and had a very prosperous tide of four hours' work, being the longest yet experienced by half an hour.

The boats left the rock again at ten o'clock, and the weather having cleared up as we drew near the vessel, the eighteen artificers who had remained on board were observed upon deck, but as the boats approached they sought their way below, being quite ashamed of their conduct. This was the only instance of refusal to go to the rock which occurred during the whole progress of the work, excepting that of the four men who declined working

upon Sunday, a case which the writer did not conceive to be at all analogous to the present. It may here be mentioned, much to the credit of these four men, that they stood foremost in embarking for the rock this morning.

Saturday, 5th Sept.—It was fortunate that a landing was not attempted this evening, for at eight o'clock the wind shifted to E.S.E., and at ten it had become a hard gale, when fifty fathoms of the floating light's hempen cable were veered out. The gale still increasing, the ship rolled and labored excessively, and at midnight eighty fathoms of cable were veered out; while the sea continued to strike the vessel with a degree of force which had not before been experienced.

Sunday, 6th Sept.—During the last night there was little rest on board of the *Pharos,* and daylight, though anxiously wished for, brought no relief, as the gale continued with unabated violence. The sea struck so hard upon the vessel's bows that it rose in great quantities, or in "green seas," as the sailors termed it, which were carried by the wind as far aft as the quarter-deck, and not unfrequently over the stern of the ship altogether. It fell occasionally so heavily on the skylight of the writer's cabin, though so far aft as to be within five feet of the helm, that the glass was broken to pieces before the deadlight could be got into its place, so that the water poured down in great quantities. In shutting out the water, the admission of light was prevented, and in the morning all continued in the most comfortless state of darkness. About ten o'clock A. M. the wind shifted to N.E., and blew, if possible, harder than before, and it was accompanied by a much heavier swell of sea. In the course of the gale, the part of the cable in the hawse-hole had been so often shifted that nearly the whole length of one of her hempen cables, of 120 fathoms, had been veered out, besides the chain-moorings. The cable, for its preservation, was also carefully served or wattled with pieces of canvas round the windlass, and with leather well greased in the hawse-hole. In this state things remained during the whole day, every sea which struck the vessel—and the seas followed each other in close succession—causing her

to shake, and all on board occasionally to tremble. At each of these strokes of the sea the rolling and pitching of the vessel ceased for a time, and her motion was felt as if she had either broke adrift before the wind or were in the act of sinking; but, when another sea came, she ranged up against it with great force, and this became the regular intimation of our being still riding at anchor.

About eleven o'clock, the writer with some difficulty got out of bed, but, in attempting to dress, he was thrown twice upon the floor at the opposite side of the cabin. In an undressed state he made shift to get about half-way up the companion-stairs, with an intention to observe the state of the sea and of the ship upon deck; but he no sooner looked over the companion than a heavy sea struck the vessel, which fell on the quarter-deck, and rushed downstairs into the officers' cabin in so considerable a quantity that it was found necessary to lift one of the scuttles in the floor, to let the water into the limbers of the ship, as it dashed from side to side in such a manner as to run into the lower tier of beds. Having been foiled in this attempt, and being completely wetted, he again got below and went to bed. In this state of the weather the seamen had to move about the necessary or indispensable duties of the ship with the most cautious use both of hands and feet, while it required all the art of the landsman to keep within the precincts of his bed. The writer even found himself so much tossed about that it became necessary, in some measure, to shut himself in bed, in order to avoid being thrown upon the floor. Indeed, such was the motion of the ship that it seemed wholly impracticable to remain in any other than a lying posture. On deck the most stormy aspect presented itself, while below all was wet and comfortless.

About two o'clock P. M. a great alarm was given throughout the ship from the effects of a very heavy sea which struck her, and almost filled the waist, pouring down into the berths below, through every chink and crevice of the hatches and skylights. From the motion of the vessel being thus suddenly deadened or checked, and from the flowing in of the water above, it is believed there

was not an individual on board who did not think, at the moment, that the vessel had foundered, and was in the act of sinking. The writer could withstand this no longer, and as soon as she again began to range to the sea he determined to make another effort to get upon deck. In the first instance, however, he groped his way in darkness from his own cabin through the berths of the officers, where all was quietness. He next entered the galley and other compartments occupied by the artificers. Here also all was shut up in darkness, the fire having been drowned out in the early part of the gale. Several of the artificers were employed in prayer, repeating psalms, and other devotional exercises in a full tone of voice; others protesting that, if they should fortunately get once more on shore, no one should ever see them afloat again. With the assistance of the landing-master, the writer made his way, holding on step by step, among the numerous impediments which lay in the way. Such was the creaking noise of the bulkheads or partitions, the dashing of the water, and the whistling noise of the winds, that it was hardly possible to break in upon such a confusion of sounds. In one or two instances, anxious and repeated inquiries were made by the artificers as to the state of things upon deck, to which the captain made the usual answer, that it could not blow long in this way, and that we must soon have better weather. The next berth in succession, moving forward in the ship, was that allotted for the seamen. Here the scene was considerably different.

Having reached the middle of this darksome berth without its inmates being aware of any intrusion, the writer had the consolation of remarking that, although they talked of bad weather and the cross accidents of the sea, yet the conversation was carried on in that sort of tone and manner which bespoke an ease and composure of mind highly creditable to them and pleasing to him. The writer immediately accosted the seamen about the state of the ship. To these inquiries they replied that the vessel being light, and having but little hold of the water, no top-rigging, with excellent ground-tackle, and everything

being fresh and new, they felt perfect confidence in their situation.

It being impossible to open any of the hatches in the fore part of the ship in communicating with the deck, the watch was changed by passing through the several berths to the companion-stair leading to the quarter-deck. The writer, therefore, made the best of his way aft, and, on a second attempt to look out, he succeeded, and saw indeed an astonishing sight. The sea or waves appeared to be ten or fifteen feet in height of unbroken water, and every approaching billow seemed as if it would overwhelm our vessel, but she continued to rise upon the waves and to fall between the seas in a very wonderful manner. It seemed to be only those seas which caught her in the act of rising which struck her with so much violence and threw such quantities of water aft. On deck there was only one solitary individual looking out, to give the alarm in the event of the ship breaking from her moorings. The seaman on watch continued only two hours; he who kept watch at this time was a tall, slender man of a black complexion; he had no greatcoat nor overall of any kind, but was simply dressed in his ordinary jacket and trousers; his hat was tied under his chin with a napkin, and he stood aft the foremast, to which he had lashed himself with a gasket or small rope round his waist, to prevent his falling upon deck or being washed overboard. When the writer looked up, he appeared to smile, which afforded a further symptom of the confidence of the crew in their ship. This person on watch was as completely wetted as if he had been drawn through the sea, which was given as a reason for his not putting on a greatcoat, that he might wet as few of his clothes as possible, and have a dry shift when he went below. Upon deck everything that was movable was out of sight, having either been stowed below, previous to the gale, or been washed overboard. Some trifling parts of the quarter-boards were damaged by the breach of the sea; and one of the boats upon deck was about one-third full of water, the eyelet-hole or drain having been accidentally stopped up, and part of her gunwale had received considerable injury. These observations were

hastily made, and not without occasionally shutting the companion, to avoid being wetted by the successive seas which broke over the bows and fell upon different parts of the deck according to the impetus with which the waves struck the vessel. By this time it was about three o'clock in the afternoon, and the gale, which had now continued with unabated force for twenty-seven hours, had not the least appearance of going off.

In the dismal prospect of undergoing another night like the last, and being in imminent hazard of parting from our cable, the writer thought it necessary to advise with the master and officers of the ship as to the probable event of the vessel's drifting from her moorings. They severally gave it as their opinion that we had now every chance of riding out the gale, which, in all probability, could not continue with the same fury many hours longer; and that even if she should part from her anchor, the storm-sails had been laid to hand, and could be bent in a very short time. They further stated that from the direction of the wind being N.E., she would sail up the Firth of Forth to Leith Roads. But if this should appear doubtful, after passing the Island and Light of May, it might be advisable at once to steer for Tyningham Sands, on the western side of Dunbar, and there run the vessel ashore. If this should happen at the time of high-water, or during the ebbing of the tide, they were of opinion, from the flatness and strength of the floating light, that no danger would attend her taking the ground, even with a very heavy sea. The writer, seeing the confidence which these gentlemen possessed with regard to the situation of things, found himself as much relieved with this conversation as he had previously been with the seeming indifference of the forecastle-men and the smile of the watch upon deck, though literally lashed to the foremast. From this time he felt himself almost perfectly at ease; at any rate, he was entirely resigned to the ultimate result.

About six o'clock in the evening the ship's company was heard moving upon deck, which on the present occasion was rather the cause of alarm. The writer accordingly rang his bell to know what was the matter, when he was

informed by the steward that the weather looked considerably better, and that the men upon deck were endeavoring to ship the smoke-funnel of the galley that the people might get some meat. This was a more favorable account than had been anticipated. During the last twenty-four hours he himself had not only had nothing to eat, but he had almost never passed a thought on the subject. Upon the mention of a change of weather, he sent the steward to learn how the artificers felt, and on his return he stated that they now seemed to be all very happy, since the cook had begun to light the galley-fire and make preparations for the suet-pudding of Sunday, which was the only dish to be attempted for the mess, from the ease with which it could both be cooked and served up.

The principal change felt upon the ship as the wind abated was her increased rolling motion, but the pitching was much diminished, and now hardly any sea came farther aft than the foremast; but she rolled so extremely hard as frequently to dip and take in water over the gunwales and rails in the waist. By nine o'clock all hands had been refreshed by the exertions of the cook and steward, and were happy in the prospect of the worst of the gale being over. The usual complement of men was also now set on watch, and more quietness was experienced throughout the ship. Although the previous night had been a very restless one, it had not the effect of inducing repose in the writer's berth on the succeeding night; for having been so much tossed about in bed during the last thirty hours, he found no easy spot to turn to, and his body was all sore to the touch, which ill accorded with the unyielding materials with which his bed-place was surrounded.

Monday, 7th Sept.—This morning, about eight o'clock, the writer was agreeably surprised to see the scuttle of his cabin skylight removed, and the bright rays of the sun admitted. Although the ship continued to roll excessively, and the sea was still running very high, yet the ordinary business on board seemed to be going forward on deck. It was impossible to steady a telescope, so as to look minutely at the progress of the waves and trace their breach upon the Bell Rock; but the height to which the cross-

running waves rose in sprays when they met each other was truly grand, and the continued roar and noise of the sea was very perceptible to the ear. To estimate the height of the sprays at forty or fifty feet would surely be within the mark. Those of the workmen who were not much afflicted with seasickness came upon deck, and the wetness below being dried up, the cabins were again brought into a habitable state. Every one seemed to meet as if after a long absence, congratulating his neighbor upon the return of good weather. Little could be said as to the comfort of the vessel, but after riding out such a gale, no one felt the least doubt or hesitation as to the safety and good condition of her moorings. The master and mate were extremely anxious, however, to heave in the hempen cable, and see the state of the clinch or iron ring of the chain-cable. But the vessel rolled at such a rate that the seamen could not possibly keep their feet at the windlass nor work the handspikes, though it had been several times attempted since the gale took off.

About twelve noon, however, the vessel's motion was observed to be considerably less, and the sailors were enabled to walk upon deck with some degree of freedom. But, to the astonishment of every one, it was soon discovered that the floating light was adrift! The windlass was instantly manned, and the men soon gave out that there was no strain upon the cable. The mizzen sail, which was bent for the occasional purpose of making the vessel ride more easily to the tide, was immediately set, and the other sails were also hoisted in a short time, when, in no small consternation, we bore away about one mile to the southwestward of the former station, and there let go the best bower anchor and cable in twenty fathoms water, to ride until the swell of the sea should fall, when it might be practicable to grapple for the moorings, and find a better anchorage for the ship.

Tuesday, 15th Sept.—This morning, at five A. M., the bell rung as a signal for landing upon the rock, a sound which, after a lapse of ten days, it is believed was welcomed by every one on board. There being a heavy breach of sea at the eastern creek, we landed, though not without

difficulty, on the western side, every one seeming more eager than another to get upon the rock; and never did hungry men sit down to a hearty meal with more appetite than the artificers began to pick the dulse from the rocks. This marine plant had the effect of reviving the sickly, and seemed to be no less relished by those who were more hardy.

While the water was ebbing, and the men were roaming in quest of their favorite morsel, the writer was examining the effects of the storm upon the forge and loose apparatus left upon the rock. Six large blocks of granite which had been landed, by way of experiment, on the 1st instant, were now removed from their places and, by the force of the sea, thrown over a rising ledge into a hole at the distance of twelve or fifteen paces from the place on which they had been landed. This was a pretty good evidence both of the violence of the storm and the agitation of the sea upon the rock. The safety of the smith's forge was always an object of essential regard. The ash-pan of the hearth or fireplace, with its weighty cast-iron back, had been washed from their places of supposed security; the chains of attachment had been broken, and these ponderous articles were found at a very considerable distance in a hole on the western side of the rock; while the tools and picks of the Aberdeen masons were scattered about in every direction. It is, however, remarkable that not a single article was ultimately lost.

This being the night on which the floating light was advertised to be lighted, it was accordingly exhibited, to the great joy of every one.

Wednesday, 16th Sept.—The writer was made happy to-day by the return of the Lighthouse yacht from a voyage to the Northern Lighthouses. Having immediately removed on board of this fine vessel of eighty-one tons register, the artificers gladly followed; for, though they found themselves more pinched for accommodation on board of the yacht, and still more so in the *Smeaton*, yet they greatly preferred either of these to the *Pharos* or floating light, on account of her rolling motion, though in all respects fitted up for their convenience.

The writer called them to the quarter-deck and informed them that, having been one month afloat, in terms of their agreement they were now at liberty to return to the workyard at Arbroath if they preferred this to continuing at the Bell Rock. But they replied that, in the prospect of soon getting the beacon erected upon the rock, and having made a change from the floating light, they were now perfectly reconciled to their situation, and would remain afloat till the end of the working season.

Thursday, 17th Sept.—The wind was N.E. this morning, and though there were only light airs, yet there was a pretty heavy swell coming ashore upon the rock. The boats landed at half-past seven o'clock A. M., at the creek on the southern side of the rock, marked Port Hamilton. But as one of the boats was in the act of entering this creek, the seaman at the bow-oar, who had just entered the service, having inadvertently expressed some fear from a heavy sea which came rolling toward the boat, and one of the artificers having at the same time looked round and missed a stroke with his oar, such a preponderance was thus given to the rowers upon the opposite side that when the wave struck the boat it threw her upon a ledge of shelving rock, where the water left her, and she having *canted* to seaward, the next wave completely filled her with water. After making considerable efforts the boat was again got afloat in the proper track of the creek, so that we landed without any other accident than a complete ducking. There being no possibility of getting a shift of clothes, the artificers began with all speed to work, so as to bring themselves into heat, while the writer and his assistants kept as much as possible in motion. Having remained more than an hour upon the rock, the boats left it at half-past nine; and, after getting on board, the writer recommended to the artificers, as the best mode of getting into a state of comfort, to strip off their wet clothes and go to bed for an hour or two. No further inconvenience was felt, and no one seemed to complain of the affection called "catching cold."

Friday, 18th Sept.—An important occurrence connected with the operations of this season was the arrival

of the *Smeaton* at four P. M., having in tow the six principal beams of the beacon-house, together with all the stanchions and other work on board for fixing it on the rock. The mooring of the floating light was a great point gained, but in the erection of the beacon at this late period of the season new difficulties presented themselves. The success of such an undertaking at any season was precarious, because a single day of bad weather occurring before the necessary fixtures could be made might sweep the whole apparatus from the rock. Notwithstanding these difficulties, the writer had determined to make the trial, although he could almost have wished, upon looking at the state of the clouds and the direction of the wind, that the apparatus for the beacon had been still in the workyard.

Saturday, 19*th Sept.*—The main beams of the beacon were made up in two separate rafts, fixed with bars and bolts of iron. One of these rafts, not being immediately wanted, was left astern of the floating light, and the other was kept in tow by the *Smeaton,* at the buoy nearest to the rock. The Lighthouse yacht rode at another buoy with all hands on board that could possibly be spared out of the floating light. The party of artificers and seamen which landed on the rock counted altogether forty in number. At half-past eight o'clock a derrick, or mast of thirty feet in height, was erected and properly supported with guy-ropes, for suspending the block for raising the first principal beam of the beacon; and a winch machine was also bolted down to the rock for working the purchase-tackle.

Upon raising the derrick, all hands on the rock spontaneously gave three hearty cheers, as a favorite omen of our future exertions in pointing out more permanently the position of the rock. Even to this single spar of timber, could it be preserved, a drowning man might lay hold. When the *Smeaton* drifted on the 2d of this month such a spar would have been sufficient to save us till she could have come to our relief.

Sunday, 20*th Sept.*—The wind this morning was variable, but the weather continued extremely favorable for

the operations throughout the whole day. At six A. M. the boats were in motion, and the raft, consisting of four of the six principal beams of the beacon-house, each measuring about sixteen inches square, and fifty feet in length, was towed to the rock, where it was anchored, that it might *ground* upon it as the water ebbed. The sailors and artificers, including all hands, to-day counted no fewer than fifty-two, being perhaps the greatest number of persons ever collected upon the Bell Rock. It was early in the tide when the boats reached the rock, and the men worked a considerable time up to their middle in water, every one being more eager than his neighbor to be useful. Even the four artificers who had hitherto declined working on Sunday were to-day most zealous in their exertions. They had indeed become so convinced of the precarious nature and necessity of the work that they never afterward absented themselves from the rock on Sunday when a landing was practicable.

Having made fast a piece of very good new line, at about two-thirds from the lower end of one of the beams, the purchase-tackle of the derrick was hooked into the turns of the line, and it was speedily raised by the number of men on the rock and the power of the winch tackle. When this log was lifted to a sufficient height, its foot, or lower end, was *stepped* into the spot which had been previously prepared for it. Two of the great iron stanchions were then set into their respective holes on each side of the beam, when a rope was passed round them and the beam, to prevent it from slipping till it could be permanently fixed. The derrick, or upright spar used for carrying the tackle to raise the first beam, was placed in such a position as to become useful for supporting the upper end of it, which now became, in its turn, the prop of the tackle for raising the second beam. The whole difficulty of this operation was in the raising and propping of the first beam, which became a convenient derrick for raising the second, these again a pair of shears for lifting the third, and the shears a triangle for raising the fourth. Having thus got four of the six principal beams set on end, it required a considerable degree of trouble to get their upper ends to fit.

Here they formed the apex of a cone, and were all together mortised into a large piece of beechwood, and secured, for the present, with ropes, in a temporary manner. During the short period of one tide all that could further be done for their security was to put a single screw-bolt through the great kneed bats or stanchions on each side of the beams, and screw the nut home.

In this manner these four principal beams were erected, and left in a pretty secure state. The men had commenced while there was about two or three feet of water upon the side of the beacon, and as the sea was smooth they continued the work equally long during flood-tide. Two of the boats being left at the rock to take off the joiners, who were busily employed on the upper parts till two o'clock P. M., this tide's work may be said to have continued for about seven hours, which was the longest that had hitherto been got upon the rock by at least three hours.

When the first boats left the rock with the artificers employed on the lower part of the work, during the flood-tide the beacon had quite a novel appearance. The beams erected formed a common base of about thirty-three feet, meeting at the top, which was about forty-five feet above the rock, and here half a dozen of the artificers were still at work. After clearing the rock the boats made a stop, when three hearty cheers were given, which were returned with equal good will by those upon the beacon, from the personal interest which every one felt in the prosperity of this work, so intimately connected with his safety.

All hands having returned to their respective ships, they got a shift of dry clothes and some refreshment. Being Sunday, they were afterward convened by signal on board of the Lighthouse yacht, when prayers were read; for every heart upon this occasion felt gladness, and every mind was disposed to be thankful for the happy and successful termination of the operations of this day.

Monday, 21*st Sept.*—The remaining two principal beams were erected in the course of this tide, which, with the assistance of those set up yesterday, was found to be a very simple operation.

The six principal beams of the beacon were thus secured,

at least in a temporary manner, in the course of two tides, or in the short space of about eleven hours and a half. Such is the progress that may be made when active hands and willing minds set properly to work in operations of this kind.

Tuesday, 22d Sept.—Having now got the weighty part of this work over, and being thereby relieved of the difficulty both of landing and victualing such a number of men, the *Smeaton* could now be spared, and she was accordingly despatched to Arbroath for a supply of water and provisions, and carried with her six of the artificers who could best be spared.

Wednesday, 23d Sept.—In going out of the eastern harbor, the boat which the writer steered shipped a sea, that filled her about one-third with water. She had also been hid for a short time, by the waves breaking upon the rock, from the sight of the crew of the preceding boat, who were much alarmed for our safety, imagining for a time that she had gone down.

The *Smeaton* returned from Arbroath this afternoon, but there was so much sea that she could not be made fast to her moorings, and the vessel was obliged to return to Arbroath without being able either to deliver the provisions or take the artificers on board. The Lighthouse yacht was also soon obliged to follow her example, as the sea was breaking heavily over her bows. After getting two reefs in the mainsail, and the third or storm-jib set, the wind being S. W., she bent to windward, though blowing a hard gale, and got into St. Andrews Bay, where we passed the night under the lee of Fifeness.

Thursday, 24th Sept.—At two o'clock this morning we were in St. Andrews Bay, standing off and on shore, with strong gales of wind at S.W.; at seven we were off the entrance of the Tay; at eight stood toward the rock, and at ten passed to leeward of it, but could not attempt a landing. The beacon, however, appeared to remain in good order, and by six P. M. the vessel had again beaten up to St. Andrews Bay, and got into somewhat smoother water for the night.

Friday, 25th Sept.—At seven o'clock bore away for the

Bell Rock, but finding a heavy sea running on it were unable to land. The writer, however, had the satisfaction to observe, with his telescope, that everything about the beacon appeared entire; and although the sea had a most frightful appearance, yet it was the opinion of every one that, since the erection of the beacon, the Bell Rock was divested of many of its terrors, and had it been possible to have got the boats hoisted out and manned, it might have even been found practicable to land. At six it blew so hard that it was found necessary to strike the topmast and take in a third reef of the mainsail, and under this low canvas we soon reached St. Andrews Bay, and got again under the lee of the land for the night. The artificers, being sea-hardy, were quite reconciled to their quarters on board of the Lighthouse yacht; but it is believed that hardly any consideration would have induced them again to take up their abode in the floating light.

Saturday, 26th Sept.—At daylight the yacht steered toward the Bell Rock, and at eight A. M. made fast to her moorings; at ten, all hands, to the amount of thirty, landed, when the writer had the happiness to find that the beacon had withstood the violence of the gale and the heavy breach of sea, everything being found in the same state in which it had been left on the 21st. The artificers were now enabled to work upon the rock throughout the whole day, both at low and high water, but it required the strictest attention to the state of the weather, in case of their being overtaken with a gale, which might prevent the possibility of getting them off the rock.

Two somewhat memorable circumstances in the annals of the Bell Rock attended the operations of this day: one was the removal of Mr. James Dove, the foreman smith, with his apparatus, from the rock to the upper part of the beacon, where the forge was now erected on a temporary platform, laid on the cross beams or upper framing. The other was the artificers, having dined for the first time upon the rock, their dinner being cooked on board of the yacht, and sent to them by one of the boats. But what afforded the greatest happiness and relief was the removal of the large bellows, which had all along been a source of

much trouble and perplexity, by their hampering and incommoding the boat which carried the smiths and their apparatus.

Saturday, 3d Oct.—The wind being west to-day, the weather was very favorable for operations at the rock, and during the morning and evening tides, with the aid of torchlight, the masons had seven hours' work upon the site of the building. The smiths and joiners, who landed at half-past six A. M., did not leave the rock till a quarter-past eleven P. M., having been at work, with little intermission, for sixteen hours and three-quarters. When the water left the rock, they were employed at the lower parts of the beacon, and as the tide rose or fell, they shifted the place of their operations. From these exertions, the fixing and securing of the beacon made rapid advancement, as the men were now landed in the morning, and remained throughout the day. But, as a sudden change of weather might have prevented their being taken off at the proper time of tide, a quantity of bread and water was always kept on the beacon.

During this period of working at the beacon all the day, and often a great part of the night, the writer was much on board of the tender; but, while the masons could work on the rock, and frequently also while it was covered by the tide, he remained on the beacon; especially during the night, as he made a point of being on the rock to the latest hour, and was generally the last person who stepped into the boat. He had laid this down as part of his plan of procedure; and in this way had acquired, in the course of the first season, a pretty complete knowledge and experience of what could actually be done at the Bell Rock, under all circumstances of the weather. By this means also his assistants, and the artificers and mariners, got into a systematic habit of proceeding at the commencement of the work, which, it is believed, continued throughout the whole of the operations.

Sunday, 4th Oct.—The external part of the beacon was now finished, with its supports and bracing-chains, and whatever else was considered necessary for its stability, in so far as the season would permit; and although much was

still wanting to complete this fabric, yet it was in such a state that it could be left without much fear of the consequences of a storm. The painting of the upper part was nearly finished this afternoon; and the *Smeaton* had brought off a quantity of brushwood and other articles, for the purpose of heating or charring the lower part of the principal beams, before being laid over with successive coats of boiling pitch, to the height of from eight to twelve feet, or as high as the rise of spring-tides. A small flagstaff having also been erected to-day, a flag was displayed for the first time from the beacon, by which its perspective effect was greatly improved. On this, as on all like occasions at the Bell Rock, three hearty cheers were given; and the steward served out a dram of rum to all hands, while the Lighthouse yacht, *Smeaton*, and floating light, hoisted their colors in compliment to the erection.

Monday, 5th Oct.—In the afternoon, and just as the tide's work was over, Mr. John Rennie, engineer, accompanied by his son, Mr. George, on their way to the harbor works of Fraserburgh, in Aberdeenshire, paid a visit to the Bell Rock, in a boat from Arbroath. It being then too late in the tide for landing, they remained on board of the Lighthouse yacht all night, when the writer, who had now been secluded from society for several weeks, enjoyed much of Mr. Rennie's interesting conversation, both on general topics, and professionally upon the progress of the Bell Rock works, on which he was consulted as chief engineer.

Tuesday, 6th Oct.—The artificers landed this morning at nine, after which one of the boats returned to the ship for the writer and Messrs. Rennie, who upon landing, were saluted with a display of the colors from the beacon and by three cheers from the workmen. Everything was now in a prepared state for leaving the rock, and giving up the works afloat for this season, excepting some small articles, which would still occupy the smiths and joiners for a few days longer. They accordingly shifted on board of the *Smeaton*, while the yacht left the rock for Arbroath, with Messrs. Rennie, the writer, and the remainder of the artificers. But, before taking leave, the

steward served out a farewell glass, when three hearty cheers were given, and an earnest wish expressed that everything, in the spring of 1808, might be found in the same state of good order as it was now about to be left.

II

OPERATIONS OF 1808

1808. *Monday, 29th Feb.*—The writer sailed from Arbroath at one A. M. in the Lighthouse yacht. At seven the floating light was hailed, and all on board found to be well. The crew were observed to have a very healthy-like appearance, and looked better than at the close of the works upon the rock. They seemed only to regret one thing, which was the secession of their cook, Thomas Elliot—not on account of his professional skill, but for his facetious and curious manner. Elliot had something peculiar in his history, and was reported by his comrades to have seen better days. He was, however, happy with his situation on board of the floating light, and, having a taste for music, dancing, and acting plays, he contributed much to the amusement of the ship's company in their dreary abode during the winter months. He had also recommended himself to their notice as a good shipkeeper, for as it did not answer Elliot to go often ashore, he had always given up his turn of leave to his neighbors. At his own desire he was at length paid off, when he had a considerable balance of wages to receive, which he said would be sufficient to carry him to the West Indies, and he accordingly took leave of the Lighthouse service.

Tuesday, 1st March.—At daybreak the Lighthouse yacht, attended by a boat from the floating light, again stood toward the Bell Rock. The weather felt extremely cold this morning, the thermometer being at 34 degrees, with the wind at east, accompanied by occasional showers of snow, and the marine barometer indicated 29.80. At half-past seven the sea ran with such force upon the rock that it seemed doubtful if a landing could be effected. At

half-past eight, when it was fairly above water, the writer took his place in the floating light's boat with the artificers, while the yacht's boat followed, according to the general rule of having two boats afloat in landing expeditions of this kind, that, in case of accident to one boat, the other might assist. In several unsuccessful attempts the boats were beat back by the breach of the sea upon the rock. On the eastern side it separated into two distinct waves, which came with a sweep round to the western side, where they met; and at the instant of their confluence the water rose in spray to a considerable height. Watching what the sailors term a *smooth,* we caught a favorable opportunity, and in a very dexterous manner the boats were rowed between the two seas, and made a favorable landing at the western creek.

At the latter end of last season, as was formerly noticed, the beacon was painted white, and from the bleaching of the weather and the sprays of the sea the upper parts were kept clean; but within the range of the tide the principal beams were observed to be thickly coated with a green stuff, the *conferva* of botanists. Notwithstanding the intrusion of these works, which had formerly banished the numerous seals that played about the rock, they were now seen in great numbers, having been in an almost undisturbed state for six months. It had now also, for the first time, got some inhabitants of the feathered tribe: in particular the scarth or cormorant, and the large herring-gull, had made the beacon a resting-place, from its vicinity to their fishing-grounds. About a dozen of these birds rested upon the cross-beams, which, in some places, were coated with their dung; and their flight, as the boats approached, was a very unlooked-for indication of life and habitation on the Bell Rock, conveying the momentary idea of the conversion of this fatal rock, from being a terror to the mariner, into a residence of man and a safeguard to shipping.

Upon narrowly examining the great iron stanchions with which the beams were fixed to the rock, the writer had the satisfaction of finding that there was not the least appearance of working or shifting at any of the joints or

places of connection; and, excepting the loosening of the bracing-chains, everything was found in the same entire state in which it had been left in the month of October. This, in the estimation of the writer, was a matter of no small importance to the future success of the work. He from that moment saw the practicability and propriety of fitting up the beacon, not only as a place of refuge in case of accident to the boats in landing, but as a residence for the artificers during the working months.

While upon the top of the beacon the writer was reminded by the landing-master that the sea was running high, and that it would be necessary to set off while the rock afforded anything like shelter to the boats, which by this time had been made fast by a long line to the beacon, and rode with much agitation, each requiring two men with boat-hooks to keep them from striking each other, or from ranging up against the beacon. But even under these circumstances the greatest confidence was felt by every one, from the security afforded by this temporary erection. For, supposing that the wind had suddenly increased to a gale, and that it had been found unadvisable to go into the boats; or, supposing they had drifted or sprung a leak from striking upon the rocks; in any of these possible and not at all improbable cases, those who might thus have been left upon the rock had now something to lay hold of, and, though occupying this dreary habitation of the sea-gull and the cormorant, affording only bread and water, yet *life* would be preserved, and the mind would still be supported by the hope of being ultimately relieved.

Wednesday, 25th May.—On the 25th of May the writer embarked at Arbroath on board of the *Sir Joseph Banks*, for the Bell Rock, accompanied by Mr. Logan senior, foreman builder, with twelve masons, and two smiths, together with thirteen seamen, including the master, mate, and steward.

Thursday, 26th May.—Mr. James Wilson, now commander of the *Pharos* floating light, and landing-master, in the room of Mr. Sinclair, who had left the service, came into the writer's cabin this morning at six o'clock, and

intimated that there was a good appearance of landing on the rock. Everything being arranged, both boats proceeded in company, and at eight A. M. they reached the rock. The Lighthouse colors were immediately hoisted upon the flagstaff of the beacon, a compliment which was duly returned by the tender and floating light, when three hearty cheers were given, and a glass of rum was served out to all hands to drink success to the operations of 1808.

Friday, 27th May.—This morning the wind was at east, blowing a fresh gale, the weather being hazy, with a considerable breach of sea setting in upon the rock. The morning bell was therefore rung, in some doubt as to the practicability of making a landing. After allowing the rock to get fully up, or to be sufficiently left by the tide, that the boats might have some shelter from the range of the sea, they proceeded at eight A. M., and upon the whole made a pretty good landing; and after two hours and three-quarters' work returned to the ship in safety.

In the afternoon the wind considerably increased, and, as a pretty heavy sea was still running, the tender rode very hard, when Mr. Taylor, the commander, found it necessary to take in the bowsprit, and strike the fore and main topmasts, that she might ride more easily. After consulting about the state of the weather, it was resolved to leave the artificers on board this evening, and carry only the smiths to the rock, as the sharpening of the irons was rather behind, from their being so much broken and blunted by the hard and tough nature of the rock, which became much more compact and hard as the depth of excavation was increased. Besides avoiding the risk of encumbering the boats with a number of men who had not yet got the full command of the oar in a breach of sea, the writer had another motive for leaving them behind. He wanted to examine the site of the building without interruption, and to take the comparative levels of the different inequalities of its area; and as it would have been painful to have seen men standing idle upon the Bell Rock, where all moved with activity, it was judged better to leave them on board. The boats landed at half-past seven P. M., and the landing-master, with the seamen,

was employed during this tide in cutting the seaweeds from the several paths leading to the landing-places, to render walking more safe, for, from the slippery state of the surface of the rock, many severe tumbles had taken place. In the mean time the writer took the necessary levels, and having carefully examined the site of the building and considered all its parts, it still appeared to be necessary to excavate to the average depth of fourteen inches over the whole area of the foundation.

Saturday, 28th May.—The wind still continued from the eastward with a heavy swell; and to-day it was accompanied with foggy weather and occasional showers of rain. Notwithstanding this, such was the confidence which the erection of the beacon had inspired that the boats landed the artificers on the rock under very unpromising circumstances, at half-past eight, and they continued at work till half-past eleven, being a period of three hours, which was considered a great tide's work in the present low state of the foundation. Three of the masons on board were so afflicted with seasickness that they had not been able to take any food for almost three days, and they were literally assisted into the boats this morning by their companions. It was, however, not a little surprising to see how speedily these men revived upon landing on the rock and eating a little dulse. Two of them afterward assisted the sailors in collecting the chips of stone and carrying them out of the way of the pickmen; but the third complained of a pain in his head, and was still unable to do anything. Instead of returning to the tender with the boats, these three men remained on the beacon all day, and had their victuals sent to them along with the smiths'. From Mr. Dove, the foreman smith, they had much sympathy, for he preferred remaining on the beacon at all hazards, to be himself relieved from the malady of seasickness. The wind continuing high, with a heavy sea, and the tide falling late, it was not judged proper to land the artificers this evening, but in the twilight the boats were sent to fetch the people on board who had been left on the rock.

Sunday, 29th May.—The wind was from the S.W. to-

day, and the signal-bell rung, as usual, about an hour before the period for landing on the rock. The writer was rather surprised, however, to hear the landing-master repeatedly call, "All hands for the rock!" and, coming on deck, he was disappointed to find the seamen only in the boats. Upon inquiry, it appeared that some misunderstanding had taken place about the wages of the artificers for Sundays. They had preferred wages for seven days statedly to the former mode of allowing a day for each tide's work on Sunday, as they did not like the appearance of working for double or even treble wages on Sunday, and would rather have it understood that their work on that day arose more from the urgency of the case than with a view to emolument. This having been judged creditable to their religious feelings, and readily adjusted to their wish, the boats proceeded to the rock, and the work commenced at nine A. M.

Monday, 30th May.—Mr. Francis Watt commenced, with five joiners, to fit up a temporary platform upon the beacon, about twenty-five feet above the highest part of the rock. This platform was to be used as the site of the smith's forge, after the beacon should be fitted up as a barrack; and here also the mortar was to be mixed and prepared for the building, and it was accordingly termed the Mortar Gallery.

The landing-master's crew completed the discharging from the *Smeaton* of her cargo of the cast-iron rails and timber. It must not here be omitted to notice that the *Smeaton* took in ballast from the Bell Rock, consisting of the shivers or chips of stone produced by the workmen in preparing the site of the building, which were now accumulating in great quantities on the rock. These the boats loaded, after discharging the iron. The object in carrying off these chips, besides ballasting the vessel, was to get them permanently out of the way, as they were apt to shift about from place to place with every gale of wind; and it often required a considerable time to clear the foundation a second time of this rubbish. The circumstance of ballasting a ship at the Bell Rock afforded great entertainment, especially to the sailors; and it was perhaps

with truth remarked that the *Smeaton* was the first vessel that had ever taken on board ballast at the Bell Rock. Mr. Pool, the commander of this vessel, afterward acquainted the writer that, when the ballast was landed upon the quay at Leith, many persons carried away specimens of it, as part of a cargo from the Bell Rock; when he added, that such was the interest excited, from the number of specimens carried away, that some of his friends suggested that he should have sent the whole to the Cross of Edinburgh, where each piece might have sold for a penny.

Tuesday, 31*st May.*—In the evening the boats went to the rock, and brought the joiners and smiths, and their sickly companions, on board of the tender. These also brought with them two baskets full of fish, which they had caught at high-water from the beacon, reporting, at the same time, to their comrades, that the fish were swimming in such numbers over the rock at high-water that it was completely hid from their sight, and nothing seen but the movement of thousands of fish. They were almost exclusively of the species called the podlie, or young coal-fish. This discovery, made for the first time to-day by the workmen, was considered fortunate, as an additional circumstance likely to produce an inclination among the artificers to take up their residence in the beacon, when it came to be fitted up as a barrack.

Tuesday,7th June.—At three o'clock in the morning the ship's bell was rung as the signal for landing at the rock. When the landing was to be made before breakfast, it was customary to give each of the artificers and seamen a dram and a biscuit, and coffee was prepared by the steward for the cabins. Exactly at four o'clock the whole party landed from three boats, including one of those belonging to the floating light, with a part of that ship's crew, which always attended the works in moderate weather. The landing-master's boat, called the *Seaman,* but more commonly called the *Lifeboat,* took the lead. The next boat, called the *Mason,* was generally steered by the writer; while the floating light's boat, *Pharos,* was under the management of the boatswain of that ship.

Having now so considerable a party of workmen and sailors on the rock, it may be proper here to notice how their labors were directed. Preparations having been made last month for the erection of a second forge upon the beacon, the smiths commenced their operations both upon the lower and higher platforms. They were employed in sharpening the picks and irons for the masons, and in making bats and other apparatus of various descriptions connected with the fitting of the railways. The landing-master's crew were occupied in assisting the millwrights in laying the railways to hand. Sailors, of all other descriptions of men, are the most accommodating in the use of their hands. They worked freely with the boring-irons, and assisted in all the operations of the railways, acting by turns as boatmen, seamen, and artificers. We had no such character on the Bell Rock as the common laborer. All the operations of this department were cheerfully undertaken by the seamen, who, both on the rock and on shipboard, were the inseparable companions of every work connected with the erection of the Bell Rock Lighthouse. It will naturally be supposed that about twenty-five masons, occupied with their picks in executing and preparing the foundation of the lighthouse, in the course of a tide of about three hours, would make a considerable impression upon an area even of forty-two feet in diameter. But in proportion as the foundation was deepened, the rock was found to be much more hard and difficult to work, while the baling and pumping of water became much more troublesome. A joiner was kept almost constantly employed in fitting the picks to their handles, which, as well as the points to the irons, were very frequently broken.

The Bell Rock this morning presented by far the most busy and active appearance it had exhibited since the erection of the principal beams of the beacon. The surface of the rock was crowded with men, the two forges flaming, the one above the other, upon the beacon, while the anvils thundered with the rebounding noise of their wooden supports, and formed a curious contrast with the occasional clamor of the surges. The wind was westerly, and the

weather being extremely agreeable, as soon after breakfast as the tide had sufficiently overflowed the rock to float the boats over it, the smiths, with a number of the artificers, returned to the beacon, carrying their fishing-tackle along with them. In the course of the forenoon the beacon exhibited a still more extraordinary appearance than the rock had done in the morning. The sea being smooth, it seemed to be afloat upon the water, with a number of men supporting themselves in all the variety of attitude and position: while, from the upper part of this wooden house, the volumes of smoke which ascended from the forges gave the whole a very curious and fanciful appearance.

In the course of this tide it was observed that a heavy swell was setting in from the eastward, and the appearance of the sky indicated a change of weather, while the wind was shifting about. The barometer also had fallen from 30 in. to 29.6. It was, therefore, judged prudent to shift the vessel to the S.W. or more distant buoy. Her bowsprit was also soon afterward taken in, the topmasts struck, and everything made *snug,* as seamen term it, for a gale. During the course of the night the wind increased and shifted to the eastward, when the vessel rolled very hard, and the sea often broke over her bows with great force.

Wednesday, 8th June.—Although the motion of the tender was much less than that of the floating light—at least in regard to the rolling motion—yet she *sended,* or pitched, much. Being also of a very handsome build, and what seamen term very *clean aft,* the sea often struck her counter with such force that the writer, who possessed the aftermost cabin, being unaccustomed to this new vessel, could not divest himself of uneasiness; for when her stern fell into the sea, it struck with so much violence as to be more like the resistance of a rock than the sea. The water, at the same time often rushed with great force up the rudder-case, and, forcing up the valve of the water-closet, the floor of his cabin was at times laid under water. The gale continued to increase, and the vessel rolled and pitched in such a manner that the hawser by which the

tender was made fast to the buoy snapped, and she went adrift. In the act of swinging round to the wind she shipped a very heavy sea, which greatly alarmed the artificers, who imagined that we had got upon the rock; but this, from the direction of the wind, was impossible. The writer, however, sprang upon deck, where he found the sailors busily employed in rigging out the bowsprit and in setting sail. From the easterly direction of the wind, it was considered most advisable to steer for the Firth of Forth, and there wait a change of weather. At two P. M. we accordingly passed the Isle of May, at six anchored in Leith Roads, and at eight the writer landed, when he came in upon his friends, who were not a little surprised at his unexpected appearance, which gave an instantaneous alarm for the safety of things at the Bell Rock.

Thursday, 9th June.—The wind still continued to blow very hard at E. by N., and the *Sir Joseph Banks* rode heavily, and even drifted with both anchors ahead, in Leith Roads. The artificers did not attempt to leave the ship last night; but there being upward of fifty people on board, and the decks greatly lumbered with the two large boats, they were in a very crowded and impatient state on board. But to-day they got ashore, and amused themselves by walking about the streets of Edinburgh, some in very humble apparel, from having only the worst of their jackets with them, which, though quite suitable for their work, were hardly fit for public inspection, being not only tattered, but greatly stained with the red color of the rock.

Friday, 10th June.—To-day the wind was at S.E., with light breezes and foggy weather. At six A. M. the writer again embarked for the Bell Rock, when the vessel immediately sailed. At eleven P. M., there being no wind, the kedge-anchor was *let go* off Anstruther, one of the numerous towns on the coast of Fife, where we waited the return of the tide.

Saturday, 11th June.—At six A. M. the *Sir Joseph* got under way, and at eleven was again made fast to the southern buoy at the Bell Rock. Though it was now late

in the tide, the writer, being anxious to ascertain the state of things after the gale, landed with the artificers, to the number of forty-four. Everything was found in an entire state; but, as the tide was nearly gone, only half an hour's work had been got when the site of the building was overflowed. In the evening the boats again landed at nine, and, after a good tide's work of three hours with torchlight, the work was left off at midnight. To the distant shipping the appearance of things under night on the Bell Rock, when the work was going forward, must have been very remarkable, especially to those who were strangers to the operations. Mr. John Reid, principal lightkeeper, who also acted as master of the floating light during the working months at the rock, described the appearance of the numerous lights situated so low in the water, when seen at the distance of two or three miles, as putting him in mind of Milton's description of the fiends in the lower regions, adding, "for it seems greatly to surpass Will-o'-the-wisp, or any of those earthly specters of which we have so often heard."

Monday, 13*th June.*—From the difficulties attending the landing on the rock, owing to the breach of sea which had for days past been around it, the artificers showed some backwardness at getting into the boats this morning; but after a little explanation this was got over. It was always observable that for some time after anything like danger had occurred at the rock, the workmen became much more cautious, and on some occasions their timidity was rather troublesome. It fortunately happened, however, that along with the writer's assistants and the sailors there were also some of the artificers themselves who felt no such scruples, and in this way these difficulties were the more easily surmounted. In matters where life is in danger it becomes necessary to treat even unfounded prejudices with tenderness, as an accident, under certain circumstances, would not only have been particularly painful to those giving directions, but have proved highly detrimental to the work, especially in the early stages of its advancement.

At four o'clock fifty-eight persons landed; but the tides

being extremely languid, the water only left the higher parts of the rock, and no work could be done at the site of the building. A third forge was, however, put in operation during a short time, for the greater convenience of sharpening the picks and irons, and for purposes connected with the preparations for fixing the railways on the rock. The weather toward the evening became thick and foggy, and there was hardly a breath of wind to ruffle the surface of the water. Had it not, therefore, been for the noise from the anvils of the smiths who had been left on the beacon throughout the day, which afforded a guide for the boats, a landing could not have been attempted this evening, especially with such a company of artificers. This circumstance confirmed the writer's opinion with regard to the propriety of connecting large bells to be rung with machinery in the lighthouse, to be tolled day and night during the continuance of foggy weather.

Thursday, 23d June.—The boats landed this evening, when the artificers had again two hours' work. The weather still continuing very thick and foggy, more difficulty was experienced in getting on board of the vessels to-night than had occurred on any previous occasion, owing to a light breeze of wind which carried the sound of the bell and the other signals made on board of the vessels away from the rock. Having fortunately made out the position of the sloop *Smeaton* at the N.E. buoy—to which we were much assisted by the barking of the ship's dog—we parted with the *Smeaton's* boat, when the boats of the tender took a fresh departure for that vessel, which lay about half a mile to the south-westward. Yet such is the very deceiving state of the tides, that, although there was a small binnacle and compass in the landing-master's boat, we had, nevertheless, passed the *Sir Joseph* a good way, when, fortunately, one of the sailors caught the sound of a blowing horn. The only fire-arms on board were a pair of swivels of one-inch caliber; but it is quite surprising how much the sound is lost in foggy weather, as the report was heard but a very short distance. The sound from the explosion of gunpowder is so instantaneous that the effect of the small guns was not so good as

either the blowing of a horn or the tolling of a bell, which afforded a more constant and steady direction for the pilot.

Wednesday, 6th July.—Landed on the rock with the three boats belonging to the tender at five P. M., and began immediately to bale the water out of the foundation-pit with a number of buckets, while the pumps were also kept in action with relays of artificers and seamen. The work commenced upon the higher parts of the foundation as the water left them, but it was now pretty generally reduced to a level. About twenty men could be conveniently employed at each pump, and it is quite astonishing in how short a time so great a body of water could be drawn off. The water in the foundation-pit at this time measured about two feet in depth, on an area of forty-two feet in diameter, and yet it was drawn off in the course of about half an hour. After this the artificers commenced with their picks and continued at work for two hours and a half, some of the sailors being at the same time busily employed in clearing the foundation of chips and in conveying the irons to and from the smiths on the beacon, where they were sharpened. At eight o'clock the sea broke in upon us and overflowed the foundation-pit, when the boats returned to the tender.

Thursday, 7th July.—The landing-master's bell rung this morning about four o'clock, and at half-past five, the foundation being cleared, the work commenced on the site of the building. But from the moment of landing, the squad of joiners and millwrights was at work upon the higher parts of the rock in laying the railways, while the anvils of the smiths resounded on the beacon, and such columns of smoke ascended from the forges that they were often mistaken by strangers at a distance for a ship on fire. After continuing three hours at work the foundation of the building was again overflowed, and the boats returned to the ship at half-past eight o'clock. The masons and pickmen had, at this period, a pretty long day on board of the tender, but the smiths and joiners were kept constantly at work upon the beacon, the stability and great convenience of which had now been so fully shown

that no doubt remained as to the propriety of fitting it up as a barrack. The workmen were accordingly employed, during the period of high-water, in making preparations for this purpose.

The foundation-pit now assumed the appearance of a great platform, and the late tides had been so favorable that it became apparent that the first course, consisting of a few irregular and detached stones for making up certain inequalities in the interior parts of the site of the building, might be laid in the course of the present spring-tides. Having been enabled to-day to get the dimensions of the foundation, or first stone, accurately taken, a mold was made of its figure, when the writer left the rock, after the tide's work of this morning, in a fast rowing-boat for Arbroath; and, upon landing, two men were immediately set to work upon one of the blocks from Mylnefield quarry, which was prepared in the course of the following day, as the stone-cutters relieved each other, and worked both night and day, so that it was sent off in one of the stone-lighters without delay.

Saturday, 9th July.—The site of the foundation-stone was very difficult to work, from its depth in the rock; but being now nearly prepared, it formed a very agreeable kind of pastime at high-water for all hands to land the stone itself upon the rock. The landing-master's crew and artificers accordingly entered with great spirit into this operation. The stone was placed upon the deck of the *Hedderwick* praam-boat, which had just been brought from Leith, and was decorated with colors for the occasion. Flags were also displayed from the shipping in the offing, and upon the beacon. Here the writer took his station with the greater part of the artificers, who supported themselves in every possible position while the boats towed the praam from her moorings and brought her immediately over the site of the building, where her grappling anchors were let go. The stone was then lifted off the deck by a tackle hooked into a Lewis bat inserted into it, when it was gently lowered into the water and grounded on the site of the building, amid the cheering acclamations of about sixty persons.

Sunday, 10th July.—At eleven o'clock the foundation-stone was laid to hand. It was of a square form, containing about twenty cubic feet, and had the figures, or date, of 1808 simply cut upon it with a chisel. A derrick, or spar of timber, having been erected at the edge of the hole and guyed with ropes, the stone was then hooked to the tackle and lowered into its place, when the writer, attended by his assistants—Mr. Peter Logan, Mr. Francis Watt, and Mr. James Wilson—applied the square, the level, and the mallet, and pronounced the following benediction: "May the Great Architect of the Universe complete and bless this building," on which three hearty cheers were given, and success to the future operations was drunk with the greatest enthusiasm.

Tuesday, 26th July.—The wind being at S.E. this evening, we had a pretty heavy swell of sea upon the rock, and some difficulty attended our getting off in safety, as the boats got aground in the creek and were in danger of being upset. Upon extinguishing the torch-lights, about twelve in number, the darkness of the night seemed quite horrible; the water being also much charged with the phosphorescent appearance which is familiar to every one on shipboard, the waves, as they dashed upon the rock, were in some degree like so much liquid flame. The scene, upon the whole, was truly awful!

Wednesday, 27th July.—In leaving the rock this evening, everything, after the torches were extinguished, had the same dismal appearance as last night, but so perfectly acquainted were the landing-master and his crew with the position of things at the rock, that comparatively little inconvenience was experienced on these occasions when the weather was moderate; such is the effect of habit, even in the most unpleasant situations. If, for example, it had been proposed to a person accustomed to a city life, at once to take up his quarters off a sunken reef and land upon it in boats at all hours of the night, the proposition must have appeared quite impracticable and extravagant; but this practise coming progressively upon the artificers, it was ultimately undertaken with the greatest alacrity. Notwithstanding this, however, it must be acknowledged

that it was not till after much labor and peril, and many an anxious hour, that the writer is enabled to state that the site of the Bell Rock Lighthouse is fully prepared for the first entire course of the building.

Friday, 12th Aug.—The artificers landed this morning at half-past ten, and after an hour and a half's work eight stones were laid, which completed the first entire course of the building, consisting of 123 blocks, the last of which was laid with three hearty cheers.

Saturday, 10th Sept.—Land at nine A. M., and by a quarter-past twelve noon twenty-three stones had been laid. The works being now somewhat elevated by the lower courses, we got quit of the very serious inconvenience of pumping water to clear the foundation-pit. This gave much facility to the operations, and was noticed with expressions of as much happiness by the artificers as the seamen had shown when relieved of the continual trouble of carrying the smith's bellows off the rock prior to the erection of the beacon.

Wednesday, 21st Sept.—Mr. Thomas Macurich, mate of the *Smeaton,* and James Scott, one of the crew, a young man about eighteen years of age, immediately went into their boat to make fast a hawser to the ring in the top of the floating buoy of the moorings, and were forthwith to proceed to land their cargo, so much wanted at the rock. The tides at this period were very strong, and the mooring-chain, when sweeping the ground, had caught hold of a rock or piece of wreck by which the chain was so shortened that when the tide flowed the buoy got almost under water, and little more than the ring appeared at the surface. When Macurich and Scott were in the act of making the hawser fast to the ring, the chain got suddenly disentangled at the bottom, and this large buoy, measuring about seven feet in height and three feet in diameter at the middle, tapering to both ends, being what seamen term a *Nun-buoy,* vaulted or sprung up with such force that it upset the boat, which instantly filled with water. Mr. Macurich, with much exertion, succeeded in getting hold of the boat's gunwale, still above the surface of the water, and by this means was saved; but the young

man Scott was unfortunately drowned. He had in all probability been struck about the head by the ring of the buoy, for although surrounded with the oars and the thwarts of the boat which floated near him, yet he seemed entirely to want the power of availing himself of such assistance, and appeared to be quite insensible, while Pool, the master of the *Smeaton,* called loudly to him; and before assistance could be got from the tender, he was carried away by the strength of the current, and disappeared.

The young man Scott was a great favorite in the service, having had something uncommonly mild and complaisant in his manner; and his loss was therefore universally regretted. The circumstances of his case were also peculiarly distressing to his mother, as her husband, who was a seaman, had for three years been confined to a French prison, and the deceased was the chief support of the family. In order in some measure to make up the loss to the poor woman for the monthly aliment regularly allowed her by her late son, it was suggested that a younger boy, a brother of the deceased, might be taken into the service. This appeared to be rather a delicate proposition, but it was left to the landing-master to arrange according to circumstances; such was the resignation, and at the same time the spirit, of the poor woman, that she readily accepted the proposal, and in a few days the younger Scott was actually afloat in the place of his brother. On representing this distressing case to the Board, the Commissioners were pleased to grant an annuity of £5 to Scott's mother.

The *Smeaton,* not having been made fast to the buoy, had, with the ebb-tide, drifted to leeward a considerable way eastward of the rock, and could not, till the return of the flood-tide, be worked up to her moorings, so that the present tide was lost, notwithstanding all exertions which had been made both ashore and afloat with this cargo. The artificers landed at six A. M.; but, as no materials could be got upon the rock this morning, they were employed in boring trenail holes and in various other operations, and after four hours' work they returned on board the tender. When the *Smeaton* got up to her moor-

ings, the landing-master's crew immediately began to unload her. There being too much wind for towing the praams in the usual way, they were warped to the rock in the most laborious manner by their windlasses, with successive grapplings and hawsers laid out for this purpose. At six P. M. the artificers landed, and continued at work till half-past ten, when the remaining seventeen stones were laid which completed the third entire course, or fourth of the lighthouse, with which the building operations were closed for the season.

III

OPERATIONS OF 1809

1809. *Wednesday, 24th May.*—The last night was the first that the writer had passed in his old quarters on board of the floating light for about twelve months, when the weather was so fine and the sea so smooth that even here he felt but little or no motion excepting at the turn of the tide, when the vessel gets into what the seamen term the *trough of the sea.* At six A. M., Mr. Watt, who conducted the operations of the railways and beacon-house, had landed with nine artificers. At half-past one P. M. Mr. Peter Logan had also landed with fifteen masons, and immediately proceeded to set up the crane. The sheer-crane or apparatus for lifting the stones out of the praam-boats at the eastern creek had been already erected, and the railways now formed about two-thirds of an entire circle round the building: some progress had likewise been made with the reach toward the western landing-place. The floors being laid, the beacon now assumed the appearance of a habitation. The *Smeaton* was at her moorings, with the *Fernie* praam-boat astern, for which she was laying down moorings, and the tender being also at her station, the Bell Rock had again put on its former busy aspect.

Wednesday, 31st May.—The landing-master's bell, often no very favorite sound, rung at six this morning;

but on this occasion, it is believed, it was gladly received by all on board, as the welcome signal of the return of better weather. The masons laid thirteen stones to-day, which the seamen had landed, together with other building materials. During these twenty-four hours the wind was from the south, blowing fresh breezes, accompanied with showers of snow. In the morning the snow showers were so thick that it was with difficulty the landing-master, who always steered the leading boat, could make his way to the rock through the drift. But at the Bell Rock neither snow nor rain, nor fog nor wind, retarded the progress of the work, if unaccompanied by a heavy swell or breach of the sea.

The weather during the months of April and May had been uncommonly boisterous, and so cold that the thermometer seldom exceeded 40°, while the barometer was generally about 29.50. We had not only hail and sleet, but the snow on the last day of May lay on the decks and rigging of the ship to the depth of about three inches; and, although now entering upon the month of June, the length of the day was the chief indication of summer. Yet such is the effect of habit, and such was the expertness of the landing-master's crew, that, even in this description of weather, seldom a tide's work was lost. Such was the ardor and zeal of the heads of the several departments at the rock, including Mr. Peter Logan, foreman builder; Mr. Francis Watt, foreman millwright, and Captain Wilson, landing-master, that it was on no occasion necessary to address them, excepting in the way of precaution or restraint. Under these circumstances, however, the writer not infrequently felt considerable anxiety, of which this day's experience will afford an example.

This morning, at a quarter-past eight, the artificers were landed as usual, and, after three hours and three-quarters' work, five stones were laid, the greater part of this tide having been taken up in completing the boring and trenailing of the stones formerly laid. At noon the writer, with the seamen and artificers, proceeded to the tender, leaving on the beacon the joiners, and several of those who

were troubled with seasickness—among whom was Mr. Logan, who remained with Mr. Watt—counting altogether eleven persons. During the first and middle parts of these twenty-four hours the wind was from the east, blowing what the seamen term "fresh breezes"; but in the afternoon it shifted to E.N.E., accompanied with so heavy a swell of sea that the *Smeaton* and tender struck their topmasts, launched in their boltsprits, and "made all snug" for a gale. At four P. M. the *Smeaton* was obliged to slip her moorings, and passed the tender, drifting before the wind, with only the foresail set. In passing, Mr. Pool hailed that he must run for the Firth of Forth to prevent the vessel from "riding under."

On board of the tender the writer's chief concern was about the eleven men left upon the beacon. Directions were accordingly given that everything about the vessel should be put in the best possible state, to present as little resistance to the wind as possible, that she might have the better chance of riding out the gale. Among these preparations the best bower cable was bent, so as to have a second anchor in readiness in case the mooring-hawser should give way, that every means might be used for keeping the vessel within sight of the prisoners on the beacon, and thereby keeping them in as good spirits as possible. From the same motive the boats were kept afloat that they might be less in fear of the vessel leaving her station. The landing-master had, however, repeatedly expressed his anxiety for the safety of the boats, and wished much to have them hoisted on board. At seven P. M. one of the boats, as he feared, was unluckily filled with sea from a wave breaking into her, and it was with great difficulty that she could be baled out and got on board, with the loss of her oars, rudder, and loose thwarts. Such was the motion of the ship that in taking this boat on board her gunwale was stove in, and she otherwise received considerable damage. Night approached, but it was still found quite impossible to go near the rock. Consulting, therefore, the safety of the second boat, she also was hoisted on board of the tender.

At this time the cabins of the beacon were only par-

tially covered, and had neither been provided with bedding nor a proper fireplace, while the stock of provisions was but slender. In these uncomfortable circumstances the people on the beacon were left for the night, nor was the situation of those on board of the tender much better. The rolling and pitching motion of the ship was excessive; and, excepting to those who had been accustomed to a residence in the floating light, it seemed quite intolerable. Nothing was heard but the hissing of the wind and the creaking of the bulkheads or partitions of the ship; the night was, therefore, spent in the most unpleasant reflections upon the condition of the people on the beacon, especially in the prospect of the tender being driven from her moorings. But, even in such a case, it afforded some consolation that the stability of the fabric was never doubted, and that the boats of the floating light were at no great distance, and ready to render the people on the rock the earliest assistance which the weather would permit. The writer's cabin being in the sternmost part of the ship, which had what sailors term a good entry, or was sharp built, the sea, as before noticed, struck her counter with so much violence that the water, with a rushing noise, continually forced its way up the rudder-case, lifted the valve of the water-closet, and overran the cabin floor. In these circumstances daylight was eagerly looked for, and hailed with delight, as well by those afloat as by the artificers upon the rock.

Friday, 2d June.—In the course of the night the writer held repeated conversations with the officer on watch, who reported that the weather continued much in the same state, and that the barometer still indicated 29.20 inches. At six A. M. the landing-master considered the weather to have somewhat moderated; and, from certain appearances of the sky, he was of opinion that a change for the better would soon take place. He accordingly proposed to attempt a landing at low water, and either get the people off the rock, or at least ascertain what state they were in. At nine A. M. he left the vessel with a boat well manned, carrying with him a supply of cooked provisions and a tea-kettle full of mulled port wine for the people

on the beacon, who had not had any regular diet for about thirty hours, while they were exposed during that period, in a great measure, both to the winds and the sprays of the sea. The boat having succeeded in landing, she returned at eleven A. M. with the artificers, who had got off with considerable difficulty, and who were heartily welcomed by all on board.

Upon inquiry it appeared that three of the stones last laid upon the building had been partially lifted from their beds by the force of the sea, and were now held only by the trenails, and that the cast-iron sheer-crane had again been thrown down and completely broken. With regard to the beacon, the sea at high-water had lifted part of the mortar gallery or lowest floor, and washed away all the lime-casks and other movable articles from it; but the principal parts of this fabric had sustained no damage. On pressing Messrs. Logan and Watt on the situation of things in the course of the night, Mr. Logan emphatically said: "That the beacon had an *ill-faured*[1] *twist* when the sea broke upon it at high-water, but that they were not very apprehensive of danger." On inquiring as to how they spent the night, it appeared that they had made shift to keep a small fire burning, and by means of some old sails defended themselves pretty well from the sea sprays.

It was particularly mentioned that by the exertions of James Glen, one of the joiners, a number of articles were saved from being washed off the mortar gallery. Glen was also very useful in keeping up the spirits of the forlorn party. In the early part of life he had undergone many curious adventures at sea, which he now recounted somewhat after the manner of the tales of the *Arabian Nights*. When one observed that the beacon was a most comfortless lodging, Glen would presently introduce some of his exploits and hardships, in comparison with which the state of things at the beacon bore an aspect of comfort and happiness. Looking to their slender stock of provisions, and their perilous and uncertain chance of speedy relief, he would launch out into an account of one of his expeditions in the North Sea, when the vessel, being much

[1] Ill-formed—ugly.—[R. L. S.]

disabled in the storm, was driven before the wind with the loss of almost all their provisions; and the ship being much infested with rats, the crew hunted these vermin with great eagerness to help their scanty allowance. By such means Glen had the address to make his companions, in some measure, satisfied, or at least passive, with regard to their miserable prospects upon this half-tide rock in the middle of the ocean. This incident is noticed, more particularly, to show the effects of such a happy turn of mind, even under the most distressing and ill-fated circumstances.

Saturday, 17th June.—At eight A. M. the artificers and sailors, forty-five in number, landed on the rock, and after four hours' work seven stones were laid. The remainder of this tide, from the threatening appearance of the weather, was occupied in trenailing and making all things as secure as possible. At twelve noon the rock and building were again overflowed, when the masons and seamen went on board of the tender, but Mr. Watt, with his squad of ten men, remained on the beacon throughout the day. As it blew fresh from the N.W. in the evening, it was found impracticable either to land the building artificers or to take the artificers off the beacon, and they were accordingly left there all night, but in circumstances very different from those of the first of this month. The house, being now in a more complete state, was provided with bedding, and they spent the night pretty well, though they complained of having been much disturbed at the time of high-water by the shaking and tremulous motion of their house and by the plashing noise of the sea upon the mortar gallery. Here James Glen's versatile powers were again at work in cheering up those who seemed to be alarmed, and in securing everything as far as possible. On this occasion he had only to recall to the recollections of some of them the former night which they had spent on the beacon, the wind and sea being then much higher, and their habitation in a far less comfortable state.

The wind still continuing to blow fresh from the N.W., at 5 P. M. the writer caused a signal to be made from the tender for the *Smeaton* and *Patriot* to slip their moorings, when they ran for Lunan Bay, an anchorage on the east

side of the Redhead. Those on board of the tender spent but a very rough night, and perhaps slept less soundly than their companions on the beacon, especially as the wind was at N.W., which caused the vessel to ride with her stern toward the Bell Rock; so that, in the event of anything giving way, she could hardly have escaped being stranded upon it.

Sunday, 18th June.—The weather having moderated to-day, the wind shifted to the westward. At a quarter-past nine A. M. the artificers landed from the tender and had the pleasure to find their friends who had been left on the rock quite hearty, alleging that the beacon was the preferable quarters of the two.

Saturday, 24th June.—Mr. Peter Logan, the foreman builder, and his squad, twenty-one in number, landed this morning at three o'clock, and continued at work four hours and a quarter, and after laying seventeen stones returned to the tender. At six A. M. Mr. Francis Watt and his squad of twelve men landed, and proceeded with their respective operations at the beacon and railways, and were left on the rock during the whole day without the necessity of having any communication with the tender, the kitchen of the beacon-house being now fitted up. It was to-day, also, that Peter Fortune—a most obliging and well-known character in the Lighthouse service—was removed from the tender to the beacon as cook and steward, with a stock of provisions as ample as his limited storeroom would admit.

When as many stones were built as comprised this day's work, the demand for mortar was proportionately increased, and the task of the mortar-makers on these occasions was both laborious and severe. This operation was chiefly performed by John Watt—a strong, active quarrier by profession—who was a perfect character in his way, and extremely zealous in his department. While the operations of the mortar-makers continued, the forge upon their gallery was not generally in use; but, as the working hours of the builders extended with the height of the building, the forge could not be so long wanted, and then a sad confusion often ensued upon the circumscribed

floor of the mortar gallery, as the operations of Watt and his assistants trenched greatly upon those of the smiths. Under these circumstances the boundary of the smiths was much circumscribed, and they were personally annoyed, especially in blowy weather, with the dust of the lime in its powdered state. The mortar-makers, on the other hand, were often not a little distressed with the heat of the fire and the sparks elicited on the anvil, and not unaptly complained that they were placed between the "devil and the deep sea."

Sunday, 25th June.—The work being now about ten feet in height, admitted of a rope ladder being distended[2] between the beacon and the building. By this "Jacob's Ladder," as the seamen termed it, a communication was kept up with the beacon while the rock was considerably under water. One end of it being furnished with tackle-blocks, was fixed to the beams of the beacon, at the level of the mortar gallery, while the further end was connected with the upper course of the building by means of two Lewis bats which were lifted from course to course as the work advanced. In the same manner a rope furnished with a traveling pulley was distended for the purpose of transporting the mortar-buckets and other light articles between the beacon and the building, which also proved a great convenience to the work. At this period the rope-ladder and tackle for the mortar had a descent from the beacon to the building; by and by they were on a level, and toward the end of the season, when the solid part had attained its full height, the ascent was from the mortar-gallery to the building.

Friday, 30th June.—The artificers landed on the rock this morning at a quarter-past six and remained at work five hours. The cooking apparatus being now in full operation, all hands had breakfast on the beacon at the usual hour, and remained there throughout the day. The crane upon the building had to be raised to-day from the eighth to the ninth course, an operation which now required all the strength that could be mustered for working

[2] This is an incurable illusion of my grandfather's; he always writes "distended" for "extended."—[R. L. S.]

the guy-tackles; for as the top of the crane was at this time about thirty-five feet above the rock, it became much more unmanageable. While the beam was in the act of swinging round from one guy to another, a great strain was suddenly brought upon the opposite tackle, with the end of which the artificers had very improperly neglected to take a turn round some stationary object, which would have given them the complete command of the tackle. Owing to this simple omission, the crane got a preponderance to one side, and fell upon the building with a terrible crash. The surrounding artificers immediately flew in every direction to get out of its way; but Michael Wishart, the principal builder, having unluckily stumbled upon one of the uncut trenails, fell upon his back. His body fortunately got between the movable beam and the upright shaft of the crane, and was thus saved; but his feet got entangled with the wheels of the crane and were severely injured. Wishart, being a robust young man, endured his misfortune with wonderful firmness; he was laid upon one of the narrow framed beds of the beacon and despatched in a boat to the tender, where the writer was when this accident happened, not a little alarmed on missing the crane from the top of the building, and at the same time seeing a boat rowing toward the vessel with great speed. When the boat came alongside with poor Wishart, stretched upon a bed covered with blankets, a moment of great anxiety followed, which was, however, much relieved when, on stepping into the boat, he was accosted by Wishart, though in a feeble voice, and with an aspect pale as death from excessive bleeding. Directions having been immediately given to the coxswain to apply to Mr. Kennedy at the workyard, to procure the best surgical aid, the boat was sent off without delay to Arbroath. The writer then landed at the rock, when the crane was in a very short time got into its place and again put in a working state.

Monday, 3d July.—The writer having come to Arbroath with the yacht, had an opportunity of visiting Michael Wishart, the artificer who had met with so severe an accident at the rock on the 30th ult., and had the pleas-

ure to find him in a state of recovery. From Dr. Stevenson's account, under whose charge he had been placed, hopes were entertained that amputation would not be necessary, as his patient still kept free of fever or any appearance of mortification; and Wishart expressed a hope that he might, at least, be ultimately capable of keeping the light at the Bell Rock, as it was not now likely that he would assist further in building the house.

Saturday, 8th July.—It was remarked to-day, with no small demonstration of joy, that the tide, being neap, did not, for the first time, overflow the building at high-water. Flags were accordingly hoisted on the beacon-house, and crane on the top of the building, which were repeated from the floating light, Lighthouse yacht, tender, *Smeaton, Patriot,* and the two praams. A salute of three guns was also fired from the yacht at high-water, when, all the artificers being collected on the top of the building, three cheers were given in testimony of this important circumstance. A glass of rum was then served out to all hands on the rock and on board of the respective ships.

Sunday, 16th July.—Besides laying, boring, trenailing, wedging, and grouting thirty-two stones, several other operations were proceeded with on the rock at low-water, when some of the artificers were employed at the railways, and at high-water at the beacon-house. The seamen having prepared a quantity of tarpaulin, or cloth laid over with successive coats of hot tar, the joiners had just completed the covering of the roof with it. This sort of covering was lighter and more easily managed than sheet-lead in such a situation. As a further defense against the weather the whole exterior of this temporary residence was painted with three coats of white-lead paint. Between the timber framing of the habitable part of the beacon the interstices were to be stuffed with moss, as a light substance that would resist dampness and check sifting winds; the whole interior was then to be lined with green baize cloth, so that both without and within the cabins were to have a very comfortable appearance.

Although the building artificers generally remained on the rock, throughout the day, and the millwrights, joiners,

and smiths, while their number was considerable, remained also during the night, yet the tender had hitherto been considered as their night quarters. But the wind having in the course of the day shifted to the N.W., and as the passage to the tender, in the boats, was likely to be attended with difficulty, the whole of the artificers, with Mr. Logan, the foreman, preferred remaining all night on the beacon, which had of late become the solitary abode of George Forsyth, a jobbing upholsterer, who had been employed in lining the beacon-house with cloth and in fitting up the bedding. Forsyth was a tall, thin, and rather loose-made man, who had an utter aversion at climbing upon the trap-ladders of the beacon, but especially at the process of boating, and the motion of the ship, which he said "was death itself." He therefore pertinaciously insisted with the landing-master in being left upon the beacon, with a small black dog as his only companion. The writer, however, felt some delicacy in leaving a single individual upon the rock, who must have been very helpless in case of accident. This fabric had, from the beginning, been rather intended by the writer to guard against accident from the loss or damage of a boat, and as a place for making mortar, a smith's shop, and a store for tools during the working months, than as permanent quarters; nor was it at all meant to be possessed until the joiner-work was completely finished, and his own cabin, and that for the foreman, in readiness, when it was still to be left to the choice of the artificers to occupy the tender or the beacon. He, however, considered Forsyth's partiality and confidence in the latter as rather a fortunate occurrence.

Wednesday, 19th July.—The whole of the artificers, twenty-three in number, now removed of their own accord from the tender, to lodge in the beacon, together with Peter Fortune, a person singularly adapted for a residence of this kind, both from the urbanity of his manners and the versatility of his talents. Fortune, in his person, was of small stature, and rather corpulent. Besides being a good Scots cook, he had acted both as groom and house-servant; he had been a soldier, a sutler, a writer's clerk,

and an apothecary, from which he possessed the art of writing and suggesting recipes, and had hence, also, perhaps, acquired a turn for making collections in natural history. But in his practise in surgery on the Bell Rock, for which he received an annual fee of three guineas, he is supposed to have been rather partial to the use of the lancet. In short, Peter was the *factotum* of the beacon-house, where he ostensibly acted in the several capacities of cook, steward, surgeon, and barber, and kept a statement of the rations or expenditure of the provisions with the strictest integrity.

In the present important state of the building, when it had just attained the height of sixteen feet, and the upper courses, and especially the imperfect one, were in the wash of the heaviest seas, an express boat arrived at the rock with a letter from Mr. Kennedy, of the workyard, stating that in consequence of the intended expedition to Walcheren, an embargo had been laid on shipping at all the ports of Great Britain: that both the *Smeaton* and *Patriot* were detained at Arbroath, and that but for the proper view which Mr. Ramsey, the port-officer, had taken of his orders, neither the express boat nor one which had been sent with provisions and necessaries for the floating light would have been permitted to leave the harbor. The writer set off without delay for Arbroath, and on landing used every possible means with the official people, but their orders were deemed so peremptory that even boats were not permitted to sail from any port upon the coast. In the mean time, the collector of the customs at Montrose applied to the Board at Edinburgh, but could, of himself, grant no relief to the Bell Rock shipping.

At this critical period Mr. Adam Duff, then Sheriff of Forfarshire, now of the county of Edinburgh, and *ex officio* one of the Commissioners of the Northern Light-houses, happened to be at Arbroath. Mr. Duff took an immediate interest in representing the circumstances of the case to the Board of Customs at Edinburgh. But such were the doubts entertained on the subject that, on having previously received the appeal from the collector at Montrose, the case had been submitted to the consid-

eration of the Lords of the Treasury, whose decision was now waited for.

In this state of things the writer felt particularly desirous to get the thirteenth course finished, that the building might be in a more secure state in the event of bad weather. An opportunity was therefore embraced on the 25th, in sailing with provisions for the floating light, to carry the necessary stones to the rock for this purpose, which were landed and built on the 26th and 27th. But so closely was the watch kept up that a Custom-house officer was always placed on board of the *Smeaton* and *Patriot* while they were afloat, till the embargo was especially removed from the lighthouse vessels. The artificers at the Bell Rock had been reduced to fifteen, who were regularly supplied with provisions, along with the crew of the floating light, mainly through the port officer's liberal interpretation of his orders.

Tuesday, 1st Aug.—There being a considerable swell and breach of sea upon the rock yesterday, the stones could not be got landed till the day following, when the wind shifted to the southward and the weather improved. But to-day no less than seventy-eight blocks of stone were landed, of which forty were built, which completed the fourteenth and part of the fifteenth courses. The number of workmen now resident in the beacon-house were augmented to twenty-four, including the landing-master's crew from the tender and the boat's crew from the floating light, who assisted at landing the stones. Those daily at work upon the rock at this period amounted to forty-six. A cabin had been laid out for the writer on the beacon, but his apartment had been the last which was finished, and he had not yet taken possession of it; for though he generally spent the greater part of the day, at this time, upon the rock, yet he always slept on board of the tender.

Friday, 11th Aug.—The wind was S.E. on the 11th, and there was so very heavy a swell of sea upon the rock that no boat could approach it.

Saturday, 12th Aug.—The gale still continuing from the S.E., the sea broke with great violence both upon the

building and the beacon. The former being twenty-three feet in height, the upper part of the crane erected on it having been lifted from course to course as the building advanced, was now about thirty-six feet above the rock. From observations made on the rise of the sea by this crane, the artificers were enabled to estimate its height to be about fifty feet above the rock, while the sprays fell with a most alarming noise upon their cabins. At low-water, in the evening, a signal was made from the beacon, at the earnest desire of some of the artificers, for the boats to come to the rock; and although this could not be effected without considerable hazard, it was, however, accomplished, when twelve of their number, being much afraid, applied to the foreman to be relieved, and went on board of the tender. But the remaining fourteen continued on the rock, with Mr. Peter Logan, the foreman builder. Although this rule of allowing an option to every man either to remain on the rock or return to the tender was strictly adhered to, yet, as it would have been extremely inconvenient to have had the men parceled out in this manner, it became necessary to embrace the first opportunity of sending those who had left the beacon to the workyard, with as little appearance of intention as possible, lest it should hurt their feelings, or prevent others from acting according to their wishes, either in landing on the rock or remaining on the beacon.

Tuesday, 15th Aug.—The wind had fortunately shifted to the S.W. this morning, and though a considerable breach was still upon the rock, yet the landing-master's crew were enabled to get one praam-boat, lightly loaded with five stones, brought in safety to the western creek; these stones were immediately laid by the artificers, who gladly embraced the return of good weather to proceed with their operations. The writer had this day taken possession of his cabin in the beacon-house. It was small, but commodious, and was found particularly convenient in coarse and blowing weather, instead of being obliged to make a passage to the tender in an open boat at all times, both during the day and the night, which was often attended with much difficulty and danger.

Saturday, 19th Aug.—For some days past the weather had been occasionally so thick and foggy that no small difficulty was experienced in going even between the rock and the tender, though quite at hand. But the floating light's boat lost her way so far in returning on board that the first land she made, after rowing all night, was Fifeness, a distance of about fourteen miles. The weather having cleared in the morning, the crew stood off again for the floating light, and got on board in a half-famished and much exhausted state, having been constantly rowing for about sixteen hours.

Sunday, 20th Aug.—The weather being very favorable to-day, fifty-three stones were landed, and the builders were not a little gratified in having built the twenty-second course, consisting of fifty-one stones, being the first course which had been completed in one day. This, as a matter of course, produced three hearty cheers. At twelve noon prayers were read for the first time on the Bell Rock; those present, counting thirty, were crowded into the upper apartment of the beacon, where the writer took a central position, while two of the artificers, joining hands, supported the Bible.

Friday, 25th Aug.—To-day the artificers laid forty-five stones, which completed the twenty-fourth course, reckoning above the first entire one, and the twenty-sixth above the rock. This finished the solid part of the building, and terminated the height of the outward casing of granite, which is thirty-one feet six inches above the rock or site of the foundation-stone, and about seventeen feet above high-water of spring-tides. Being a particular crisis in the progress of the lighthouse, the landing and laying of the last stone for the season was observed with the usual ceremonies.

From observations often made by the writer, in so far as such can be ascertained, it appears that no wave in the open seas, in an unbroken state, rises more than from seven to nine feet above the general surface of the ocean. The Bell Rock Lighthouse may therefore now be considered at from eight to ten feet above the height of the waves; and, although the sprays and heavy seas have often

been observed, in the present state of the building, to rise to the height of fifty feet, and fall with a tremendous noise on the beacon-house, yet such seas were not likely to make any impression on a mass of solid masonry, containing about 1,400 tons.

Wednesday, 30th Aug.—The whole of the artificers left the rock at mid-day, when the tender made sail for Arbroath, which she reached about six P. M. The vessel being decorated with colors, and having fired a salute of three guns on approaching the harbor, the workyard artificers, with a multitude of people, assembled at the harbor, when mutual cheering and congratulations took place between those afloat and those on the quays. The tender had now, with little exception, been six months on the station at the Bell Rock, and during the last four months few of the squad of builders had been ashore. In particular, Mr. Peter Logan, the foreman, and Mr. Robert Selkirk, principal builder, had never once left the rock. The artificers, having made good wages during their stay, like seamen upon a return voyage, were extremely happy, and spent the evening with much innocent mirth and jollity.

In reflecting upon the state of the matters at the Bell Rock during the working months, when the writer was much with the artificers, nothing can equal the happy manner in which these excellent workmen spent their time. They always went from Arbroath to their arduous task cheering; and they generally returned in the same hearty state. While at the rock, between the tides, they amused themselves in reading, fishing, music, playing cards, drafts, etc., or in sporting with one another. In the workyard at Arbroath the young men were almost, without exception, employed in the evening at school, in writing and arithmetic, and not a few were learning architectural drawing, for which they had every convenience and facility, and were, in a very obliging manner, assisted in their studies by Mr. David Logan, clerk of the works. It therefore affords the most pleasing reflections to look back upon the pursuits of about sixty individuals who for years conducted themselves, on all occasions, in a sober and rational manner.

IV

OPERATIONS OF 1810

1810. *Thursday, 10th May.*—The wind had shifted to-day to W.N.W., when the writer, with considerable difficulty, was enabled to land upon the rock for the first time this season, at ten A. M. Upon examining the state of the building, and apparatus in general, he had the satisfaction to find everything in good order. The mortar in all the joints was perfectly entire. The building, now thirty feet in height, was thickly coated with *fuci* to the height of about fifteen feet, calculating from the rock: on the eastern side, indeed, the growth of seaweed was observable to the full height of thirty feet, and even on the top or upper bed of the last-laid course, especially toward the eastern side, it had germinated, so as to render walking upon it somewhat difficult.

The beacon-house was in a perfectly sound state, and apparently just as it had been left in the month of November. But, the tides being neap, the lower parts, particularly where the beams rested on the rock, could not now be seen. The floor of the mortar gallery, having been already laid down by Mr. Watt and his men on a former visit, was merely soaked with the sprays; but the joisting-beams which supported it had, in the course of the winter, been covered with a fine downy conferva produced by the range of the sea. They were also a good deal whitened with the mute of the cormorant and other sea-fowls, which had roosted upon the beacon in winter. Upon ascending to the apartments, it was found that the motion of the sea had thrown open the door of the cook-house: this was only shut with a single latch, that in case of shipwreck at the Bell Rock the mariner might find ready access to the shelter of this forlorn habitation, where a supply of provisions was kept; and, being within two miles and a half of the floating light, a signal could readily be observed, when a boat might be sent to his relief as soon as the weather permitted. An arrangement for this purpose

formed one of the instructions on board of the floating light, but happily no instance occurred for putting it in practise. The hearth or fireplace of the cook-house was built of brick in as secure a manner as possible, to prevent accident from fire; but some of the plaster-work had shaken loose, from its damp state, and the tremulous motion of the beacon in stormy weather. The writer next ascended to the floor which was occupied by the cabins of himself and his assistants, which were in tolerably good order, having only a damp and musty smell. The barrack for the artificers, over all, was next visited; it had now a very dreary and deserted appearance when its former thronged state was recollected. In some parts the water had come through the boarding, and had discolored the lining of green cloth, but it was, nevertheless, in a good habitable condition. While the seamen were employed in landing a stock of provisions, a few of the artificers set to work with great eagerness to sweep and clean the several apartments. The exterior of the beacon was, in the mean time, examined, and found in perfect order. The painting, though it had a somewhat blanched appearance, adhered firmly both on the sides and roof, and only two or three panes of glass were broken in the cupola, which had either been blown out by the force of the wind or perhaps broken by sea-fowl.

Having on this occasion continued upon the building and beacon a considerable time after the tide had begun to flow, the artificers were occupied in removing the forge from the top of the building, to which the gangway or wooden bridge gave great facility; and, although it stretched or had a span of forty-two feet, its construction was extremely simple, while the roadway was perfectly firm and steady. In returning from this visit to the rock every one was pretty well soused in spray before reaching the tender at two o'clock P. M., where things awaited the landing party in as comfortable a way as such a situation would admit.

Friday, 11th May.—The wind was still easterly, accompanied with rather a heavy swell of sea for the operations in hand. A landing was, however, made this

morning, when the artificers were immediately employed in scraping the seaweed off the upper course of the building, in order to apply the molds of the first course of the staircase, that the joggle-holes might be marked off in the upper course of the solid. This was also necessary previously to the writer's fixing the position of the entrance-door, which was regulated chiefly by the appearance of the growth of the seaweed on the building, indicating the direction of the heaviest seas, on the opposite side of which the door was placed. The landing-master's crew succeeded in towing into the creek on the western side of the rock the praam-boat with the balance-crane, which had now been on board of the praam for five days. The several pieces of this machine, having been conveyed along the railways upon the wagons to a position immediately under the bridge, were elevated to its level, or thirty feet above the rock, in the following manner. A chain-tackle was suspended over a pulley from the cross-beam connecting the tops of the kingposts of the bridge, which was worked by a winch-machine with wheel, pinion, and barrel, round which last the chain was wound. This apparatus was placed on the beacon side of the bridge, at the distance of about twelve feet from the cross-beam and pulley in the middle of the bridge. Immediately under the cross-beam a hatch was formed in the roadway of the bridge, measuring seven feet in length and five feet in breadth, made to shut with folding boards like a double door, through which stones and other articles were raised; the folding doors were then let down, and the stone or load was gently lowered upon a wagon which was wheeled on railway trucks toward the lighthouse. In this manner the several castings of the balance-crane were got up to the top of the solid of the building.

The several apartments of the beacon-house having been cleaned out and supplied with bedding, a sufficient stock of provisions was put into the store, when Peter Fortune, formerly noticed, lighted his fire in the beacon for the first time this season. Sixteen artificers at the same time mounted to their barrack-room, and the foremen of the works also took possession of their cabin, all heartily

rejoiced at getting rid of the trouble of boating and the sickly motion of the tender.

Saturday, 12*th May.*—The wind was at E.N.E., blowing so fresh, and accompanied with so much sea, that no stones could be landed to-day. The people on the rock, however, were busily employed in screwing together the balance-crane, cutting out the joggle-holes in the upper course, and preparing all things for commencing the building operations.

Sunday, 13*th May.*—The weather still continues boisterous, although the barometer has all the while stood at about 30 inches. Toward evening the wind blew so fresh at E. by S. that the boats both of the *Smeaton* and tender were obliged to be hoisted in, and it was feared that the *Smeaton* would have to slip her moorings. The people on the rock were seen busily employed, and had the balance-crane apparently ready for use, but no communication could be had with them to-day.

Monday, 14*th May.*—The wind continued to blow so fresh, and the *Smeaton* rode so heavily with her cargo, that at noon a signal was made for her getting under way, when she stood toward Arbroath; and on board of the tender we are still without any communication with the people on the rock, where the sea was seen breaking over the top of the building in great sprays, and raging with much agitation among the beams of the beacon.

Thursday, 17*th May.*—The wind, in the course of the day, had shifted from north to west; the sea being also considerably less, a boat landed on the rock at six P. M., for the first time since the 11th, with the provisions and water brought off by the *Patriot.* The inhabitants of the beacon were all well, but tired above measure for want of employment, as the balance-crane and apparatus was all in readiness. Under these circumstances they felt no less desirous of the return of good weather than those afloat, who were continually tossed with the agitation of the sea. The writer, in particular, felt himself almost as much fatigued and worn-out as he had been at any period since the commencement of the work. The very backward state of the weather at so advanced a period of the season, un-

avoidably created some alarm lest he should be overtaken with bad weather at a late period of the season, with the building operations in an unfinished state. These apprehensions were, no doubt, rather increased by the inconveniences of his situation afloat, as the tender rolled and pitched excessively at times. This being also his first offset for the season, every bone of his body felt sore with preserving a sitting posture while he endeavored to pass away the time in reading; as for writing, it was wholly impracticable. He had several times entertained thoughts of leaving the station for a few days and going into Arbroath with the tender till the weather should improve; but as the artificers had been landed on the rock he was averse to this at the commencement of the season, knowing also that he would be equally uneasy in every situation till the first cargo was landed: and he therefore resolved to continue at his post until this should be effected.

Friday, 18th May.—The wind being now N.W., the sea was considerably run down, and this morning at five o'clock the landing-master's crew, thirteen in number, left the tender; and, having now no detention with the landing of artificers, they proceeded to unmoor the *Hedderwick* praam-boat, and towed her alongside of the *Smeaton;* and in the course of the day twenty-three blocks of stone, three casks of pozzolano, three of sand, three of lime, and one of Roman cement, together with three bundles of trenails and three of wedges, were all landed on the rock and raised to the top of the building by means of the tackle suspended from the cross-beam on the middle of the bridge.

The stones were then moved along the bridge on the wagon to the building within reach of the balance-crane, with which they were laid in their respective places on the building. The masons immediately thereafter proceeded to bore the trenail-holes into the course below, and otherwise to complete the one in hand. When the first stone was to be suspended by the balance-crane, the bell on the beacon was rung, and all the artificers and seamen were collected on the building. Three hearty cheers were given while it was lowered into its place, and the

steward served round a glass of rum, when success was drunk to the further progress of the building.

Sunday, 20th May.—The wind was southerly to-day, but there was much less sea than yesterday, and the landing-master's crew were enabled to discharge and land twenty-three pieces of stone and other articles for the work. The artificers had completed the laying of the twenty-seventh or first course of the staircase this morning, and in the evening they finished the boring, trenailing, wedging, and grouting it with mortar. At twelve o'clock noon the beacon-house bell was rung, and all hands were collected on the top of the building, where prayers were read for the first time on the lighthouse, which forcibly struck every one, and had, upon the whole, a very impressive effect.

From the hazardous situation of the beacon-house with regard to fire, being composed wholly of timber, there was no small risk from accident; and on this account one of the most steady of the artificers was appointed to see that the fire of the cooking-house, and the lights in general, were carefully extinguished at stated hours.

Monday, 4th June.—This being the birthday of our much-revered Sovereign King George III, now in the fiftieth year of his reign, the shipping of the Lighthouse Service were this morning decorated with colors according to the taste of their respective captains. Flags were also hoisted upon the beacon-house and balance-crane on the top of the building. At twelve noon a salute was fired from the tender, when the King's health was drunk, with all the honors, both on the rock and on board of the shipping.

Tuesday, 5th June.—As the lighthouse advanced in height, the cubical contents of the stones were less, but they had to be raised to a greater height; and the walls, being thinner, were less commodious for the necessary machinery and the artificers employed, which considerably retarded the work. Inconvenience was also occasionally experienced from the men dropping their coats, hats, mallets, and other tools, at high-water, which were carried away by the tide; and the danger to the people themselves was now

greatly increased. Had any of them fallen from the beacon or building at high-water, while the landing-master's crew were generally engaged with the craft at a distance, it must have rendered the accident doubly painful to those on the rock, who at this time had no boat, and consequently no means of rendering immediate and prompt assistance. In such cases it would have been too late to have got a boat by signal from the tender. A small boat, which could be lowered at pleasure, was therefore suspended by a pair of davits projected from the cook-house, the keel being about thirty feet from the rock. This boat, with its tackle, was put under the charge of James Glen, of whose exertions on the beacon mention has already been made, and who, having in early life been a seaman, was also very expert in the management of a boat. A life-buoy was likewise suspended from the bridge, to which a coil of line two hundred fathoms in length was attached, which could be let out to a person falling into the water, or to the people in the boat, should they not be able to work her with the oars.

Thursday, 7th June.—To-day twelve stones were landed on the rock, being the remainder of the *Patriot's* cargo; and the artificers built the thirty-ninth course, consisting of fourteen stones. The Bell Rock works had now a very busy appearance, as the lighthouse was daily getting more into form. Besides the artificers and their cook, the writer and his servant were also lodged on the beacon, counting in all twenty-nine; and at low-water the landing-master's crew, consisting of from twelve to fifteen seamen, were employed in transporting the building materials, working the landing apparatus on the rock, and dragging the stone wagons along the railways.

Friday, 8th June.—In the course of this day the weather varied much. In the morning it was calm, in the middle part of the day there were light airs of wind from the south, and in the evening fresh breezes from the east. The barometer in the writer's cabin in the beacon-house oscillated from 30 inches to 30.42, and the weather was extremely pleasant. This, in any situation, forms one of the chief comforts of life; but, as may easily be conceived,

it was doubly so to people stuck, as it were, upon a pinnacle in the middle of the ocean.

Sunday, 10th June.—One of the praam-boats had been brought to the rock with eleven stones, notwithstanding the perplexity which attended the getting of those formerly landed taken up to the building. Mr. Peter Logan, the foreman builder, interposed, and prevented this cargo from being delivered; but the landing-master's crew were exceedingly averse to this arrangement, from an idea that "ill-luck" would in future attend the praam, her cargo, and those who navigated her, from thus reversing her voyage.

It may be noticed that this was the first instance of a praam-boat having been sent from the Bell Rock with any part of her cargo on board, and was considered so uncommon an occurrence that it became a topic of conversation among the seamen and artificers.

Tuesday, 12th June.—To-day the stones formerly sent from the rock were safely landed, notwithstanding the augury of the seamen, in consequence of their being sent away two days before.

Thursday, 14th June.—To-day twenty-seven stones and eleven joggle-pieces were landed, part of which consisted of the forty-seventh course, forming the storeroom floor. The builders were at work this morning by four o'clock, in the hopes of being able to accomplish the laying of the eighteen stones of this course. But at eight o'clock in the evening they had still two to lay, and, as the stones of this course were very unwieldy, being six feet in length, they required much precaution and care both in lifting and laying them. It was only on the writer's suggestion to Mr. Logan that the artificers were induced to leave off, as they had intended to complete this floor before going to bed. The two remaining stones were, however, laid in their places without mortar when the bell on the beacon was rung, and, all hands being collected on the top of the building, three hearty cheers were given on covering the first apartment. The steward then served out a dram to each, when the whole retired to their barrack much fatigued, but with the anticipation of the most perfect

repose even in the "hurricane-house," amid the dashing seas on the Bell Rock.

While the workmen were at breakfast and dinner it was the writer's usual practise to spend his time on the walls of the building, which, notwithstanding the narrowness of the track, nevertheless formed his principal walk when the rock was under water. But this afternoon he had his writing-desk set upon the storeroom floor, when he wrote to Mrs. Stevenson—certainly the first letter dated from the Bell Rock Lighthouse—giving a detail of the fortunate progress of the work, with an assurance that the lighthouse would soon be completed at the rate at which it now proceeded; and, the *Patriot* having sailed for Arbroath in the evening, he felt no small degree of pleasure in despatching this communication to his family.

The weather still continuing favorable for the operations at the rock, the work proceeded with much energy, through the exertions both of the seamen and artificers. For the more speedy and effectual working of the several tackles in raising the materials as the building advanced in height, and there being a great extent of railway to attend to, which required constant repairs, two additional millwrights were added to the complement on the rock, which, including the writer, now counted thirty-one in all. So crowded was the men's barrack that the beds were ranged five tiers in height, allowing only about one foot eight inches for each bed. The artificers commenced this morning at five o'clock, and, in the course of the day, they laid the forty-eighth and forty-ninth courses, consisting each of sixteen blocks. From the favorable state of the weather, and the regular manner in which the work now proceeded, the artificers had generally from four to seven extra hours' work, which, including their stated wages of 3s. 4d., yielded them from 5s. 4d. to about 6s. 10d. per day, besides their board; even the postage of their letters was paid while they were at the Bell Rock. In these advantages the foremen also shared, having about double the pay and amount of premiums of the artificers. The seamen being less out of their element in the Bell Rock operations than the landsmen, their premiums consisted in

a lump sum payable at the end of the season, which extended from three to ten guineas.

As the laying of the floors was somewhat tedious, the landing-master and his crew had got considerably beforehand with the building artificers in bringing materials faster to the rock than they could be built. The seamen having, therefore, some spare time, were occasionally employed during fine weather in dredging or grappling for the several mushroom anchors and mooring chains which had been lost in the vicinity of the Bell Rock during the progress of the work by the breaking loose and drifting of the floating buoys. To encourage their exertions in this search, five guineas were offered as a premium for each set they should find; and, after much patient application, they succeeded to-day in hooking one of these lost anchors with its chain.

It was a general remark at the Bell Rock, as before noticed, that fish were never plenty in its neighborhood excepting in good weather. Indeed, the seamen used to speculate about the state of the weather from their success in fishing. When the fish disappeared at the rock, it was considered a sure indication that a gale was not far off, as the fish seemed to seek shelter in deeper water from the roughness of the sea during these changes in the weather. At this time the rock, at high-water, was completely covered with podlies, or the fry of the coal-fish, about six or eight inches in length. The artificers sometimes occupied half an hour after breakfast and dinner in catching these little fishes, but were more frequently supplied from the boats of the tender.

Saturday, 16th June.—The landing-master having this day discharged the *Smeaton* and loaded the *Hedderwick* and *Dickie* praam-boats with nineteen stones, they were towed to their respective moorings, when Captain Wilson, in consequence of the heavy swell of sea, came in his boat to the beacon-house to consult with the writer as to the propriety of venturing the loaded praam-boats with their cargoes to the rock while so much sea was running. After some dubiety expressed on the subject, in which the ardent mind of the landing-master suggested many argu-

ments in favor of his being able to convey the praams in perfect safety, it was acceded to. In bad weather, and especially on occasions of difficulty like the present, Mr. Wilson, who was an extremely active seaman, measuring about five feet three inches in height, of a robust habit, generally dressed himself in what he called a *monkey jacket,* made of thick duffle cloth, with a pair of Dutchman's petticoat trousers, reaching only to his knees, where they were met with a pair of long water-tight boots; with this dress, his glazed hat, and his small brass speaking-trumpet in his hand, he bade defiance to the weather. When he made his appearance in this most suitable attire for the service, his crew seemed to possess additional life, never failing to use their utmost exertions when the captain put on his *storm rigging.* They had this morning commenced loading the praam-boats at four o'clock, and proceeded to tow them into the eastern landing-place, which was accomplished with much dexterity, though not without the risk of being thrown, by the force of the sea, on certain projecting ledges of the rock. In such a case the loss even of a single stone would have greatly retarded the work.

For the greater safety in entering the creek, it was necessary to put out several warps and guy-ropes to guide the boats into its narrow and intricate entrance; and it frequently happened that the sea made a clean breach over the praams, which not only washed their decks, but completely drenched the crew in water.

Sunday, 17th June.—It was fortunate, in the present state of the weather, that the fiftieth course was in a sheltered spot, within reach of the tackle of the winch-machine upon the bridge; a few stones were stowed upon the bridge itself, and the remainder upon the building, which kept the artificers at work. The stowing of the materials upon the rock was the department of Alexander Brebner, mason, who spared no pains in attending to the safety of the stones, and who, in the present state of the work, when the stones were landed faster than could be built, generally worked till the water rose to his middle. At one o'clock to-day the bell rang for prayers, and all hands

were collected into the upper barrack-room of the beacon-house, when the usual service was performed.

The wind blew very hard in the course of last night from N.E., and to-day the sea ran so high that no boat could approach the rock. During the dinner-hour, when the writer was going to the top of the building as usual, but just as he had entered the door and was about to ascend the ladder, a great noise was heard overhead, and in an instant he was soused in water from a sea which had most unexpectedly come over the walls, though now about fifty-eight feet in height. On making his retreat, he found himself completely whitened by the lime, which had mixed with the water while dashing down through the different floors; and, as nearly as he could guess, a quantity equal to about a hogshead had come over the walls, and now streamed out at the door. After having shifted himself, he again sat down in his cabin, the sea continuing to run so high that the builders did not resume their operations on the walls this afternoon. The incident just noticed did not create more surprise in the mind of the writer than the sublime appearance of the waves as they rolled majestically over the rock. This scene he greatly enjoyed while sitting at his cabin window; each wave approached the beacon like a vast scroll unfolding; and in passing discharged a quantity of air, which he not only distinctly felt, but was even sufficient to lift the leaves of a book which lay before him. These waves might be ten or twelve feet in height, and about 250 feet in length, their smaller end being toward the north, where the water was deep, and they were opened or cut through by the interposition of the building and beacon. The gradual manner in which the sea, upon these occasions, is observed to become calm or to subside, is a very remarkable feature of this phenomenon. For example, when a gale is succeeded by a calm, every third or fourth wave forms one of these great seas, which occur in spaces of from three to five minutes, as noted by the writer's watch; but in the course of the next tide they became less frequent, and take off so as to occur only in ten or fifteen minutes; and, singular enough, at the third tide after such gales, the writer has

remarked that only one or two of these great waves appear in the course of the whole tide.

Tuesday, 19th June.—The 19th was a very unpleasant and disagreeable day, both for the seamen and artificers, as it rained throughout with little intermission from four A. M. till eleven P. M., accompanied with thunder and lightning, during which period the work nevertheless continued unremittingly, and the builders laid the fifty-first and fifty-second courses. This state of weather was no less severe upon the mortar-makers, who required to temper or prepare the mortar of a thicker or thinner consistency, in some measure, according to the state of the weather. From the elevated position of the building the mortar gallery on the beacon was now much lower, and the lime-buckets were made to traverse upon a rope distended between it and the building. On occasions like the present, however, there was often a difference of opinion between the builders and the mortar-makers. John Watt, who had the principal charge of the mortar, was a most active worker, but, being somewhat of an irascible temper, the builders occasionally amused themselves at his expense: for while he was eagerly at work with his large iron-shod pestle in the mortar-tub, they often sent down contradictory orders, some crying, "Make it a little stiffer, or thicker, John," while others called out to make it "thinner," to which he generally returned very speedy and sharp replies, so that these conversations at times were rather amusing.

During wet weather the situation of the artificers on the top of the building was extremely disagreeable; for although their work did not require great exertion, yet, as each man had his particular part to perform, either in working the crane or in laying the stones, it required the closest application and attention, not only on the part of Mr. Peter Logan, the foreman, who was constantly on the walls, but also of the chief workmen. Robert Selkirk, the principal builder, for example, had every stone to lay in its place. David Cumming, a mason, had the charge of working the tackle of the balance-weight, and James Scott, also a mason, took charge of the purchase with

which the stones were laid; while the pointing the joints of the walls with cement was intrusted to William Reid and William Kennedy, who stood upon a scaffold suspended over the walls in rather a frightful manner. The least act of carelessness or inattention on the part of any of these men might have been fatal, not only to themselves, but also to the surrounding workmen, especially if any accident had happened to the crane itself, while the material damage or loss of a single stone would have put an entire stop to the operations until another could have been brought from Arbroath. The artificers, having wrought seven and a half hours of extra time to-day, had 3s. 9d. of extra pay, while the foremen had 7s. 6d. over and above their stated pay and board. Although, therefore, the work was both hazardous and fatiguing, yet, the encouragement being considerable, they were always very cheerful, and perfectly reconciled to the confinement and other disadvantages of the place.

During fine weather, and while the nights were short, the duty on board of the floating light was literally nothing but a waiting on, and therefore one of her boats, with a crew of five men, daily attended the rock, but always returned to the vessel at night. The carpenter, however, was one of those who was left on board of the ship, as he also acted in the capacity of assistant lightkeeper, being, besides, a person who was apt to feel discontent and to be averse to changing his quarters, especially to work with the millwrights and joiners at the rock, who often, for hours together, wrought knee-deep, and not unfrequently up to the middle in water. Mr. Watt having about this time made a requisition for another hand, the carpenter was ordered to attend the rock in the floating light's boat. This he did with great reluctance, and found so much fault that he soon got into discredit with his messmates. On this occasion he left the Lighthouse service, and went as a sailor in a vessel bound for America—a step which, it is believed, he soon regretted, as, in the course of things, he would, in all probability, have accompanied Mr. John Reid, the principal lightkeeper of the floating light, to the Bell Rock Lighthouse as his principal assistant. The

writer had a wish to be of service to this man, as he was one of those who came off to the floating light in the month of September, 1807, while she was riding at single anchor after the severe gale of the 7th, at a time when it was hardly possible to make up this vessel's crew; but the crossness of his manner prevented his reaping the benefit of such intentions.

Friday, 22d June.—The building operations had for some time proceeded more slowly, from the higher parts of the lighthouse requiring much longer time than an equal tonnage of the lower courses. The duty of the landing-master's crew had, upon the whole, been easy of late; for though the work was occasionally irregular, yet the stones being lighter, they were more speedily lifted from the hold of the stone vessel to the deck of the praam-boat, and again to the wagons on the railway, after which they came properly under the charge of the foreman builder. It is, however, a strange, though not an uncommon, feature in the human character, that, when people have least to complain of, they are most apt to become dissatisfied, as was now the case with the seamen employed in the Bell Rock service about their rations of beer. Indeed, ever since the carpenter of the floating light, formerly noticed, had been brought to the rock, expressions of discontent had been manifested upon various occasions. This being represented to the writer, he sent for Captain Wilson, the landing-master, and Mr. Taylor, commander of the tender, with whom he talked over the subject. They stated that they considered the daily allowance of the seamen in every respect ample, and that, the work being now much lighter than formerly, they had no just ground for complaint; Mr. Taylor adding that, if those who now complained "were even to be fed upon soft bread and turkeys, they would not think themselves right." At twelve noon the work of the landing-master's crew was completed for the day; but at four o'clock, while the rock was under water, those on the beacon were surprised by the arrival of a boat from the tender without any signal having been made from the beacon. It brought the following note to the writer from the landing-master's crew:

"Sir Joseph Banks Tender.

"SIR—We are informed by our masters that our allowance is to be as before, and it is not sufficient to serve us, for we have been at work since four o'clock this morning, and we have come on board to dinner, and there is no beer for us before to-morrow morning, to which a sufficient answer is required before we go from the beacon; and we are, Sir, your most obedient servants."

On reading this, the writer returned a verbal message, intimating that an answer would be sent on board of the tender, at the same time ordering the boat instantly to quit the beacon. He then addressed the following note to the landing-master:

"Beacon-house, 22d June, 1810,
Five o'clock p. m.

"SIR—I have just now received a letter purporting to be from the landing-master's crew and seamen on board of the *Sir Joseph Banks,* though without either date or signature; in answer to which I enclose a statement of the daily allowance of provisions for the seamen in this service, which you will post up in the ship's galley, and at seven o'clock this evening I will come on board to inquire into this unexpected and most unnecessary demand for an additional allowance of beer. In the enclosed you will not find any alteration from the original statement, fixed in the galley at the beginning of the season. I have, however, judged this mode of giving your people an answer preferable to that of conversing with them on the beacon. I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

"ROBERT STEVENSON.

"TO CAPTAIN WILSON."

"Beacon House, 22d June, 1810.—Schedule of the daily allowance of provisions to be served out on board of the *Sir Joseph Banks* tender: '1½ lb. beef; 1 lb. bread; 8 oz. oat meal; 2 oz. barley; 2 oz. butter; 3 quarts beer; vegetables and salt no stated allowance. When the seamen are employed in unloading the *Smeaton* and *Patriot,* a draft

of beer is, as formerly, to be allowed from the stock of these vessels. Further, in wet and stormy weather, when the work commences very early in the morning, or continues till a late hour at night, a glass of spirits will also be served out to the crew as heretofore, on the requisition of the landing-master.

"ROBERT STEVENSON."

On writing this letter and schedule, a signal was made on the beacon for the landing-master's boat, which immediately came to the rock, and the schedule was afterward stuck up in the tender's galley. When sufficient time had been allowed to the crew to consider of their conduct, a second signal was made for a boat, and at seven o'clock the writer left the Bell Rock, after a residence of four successive weeks in the beacon-house. The first thing which occupied his attention on board of the tender was to look round upon the lighthouse, which he saw, with some degree of emotion and surprise, now vying in height with the beacon-house; for although he had often viewed it from the extremity of the western railway on the rock, yet the scene, upon the whole, seemed far more interesting from the tender's moorings at the distance of about half a mile.

The *Smeaton* having just arrived at her moorings with a cargo, a signal was made for Captain Pool to come on board of the tender, that he might be at hand to remove from the service any of those who might persist in their discontented conduct. One of the two principal leaders in this affair, the master of one of the praam-boats, who had also steered the boat which brought the letter to the beacon, was first called upon deck, and asked if he had read the statement fixed up in the galley this afternoon, and whether he was satisfied with it. He replied that he had read the paper, but was not satisfied, as it held out no alteration on the allowance, on which he was immediately ordered into the *Smeaton's* boat. The next man called had but lately entered the service, and, being also interrogated as to his resolution, he declared himself to be of the same mind with the praam-master, and was also forthwith or-

dered into the boat. The writer, without calling any more of the seamen, went forward to the gangway, where they were collected and listening to what was passing upon deck. He addressed them at the hatchway, and stated that two of their companions had just been dismissed the service and sent on board of the *Smeaton* to be conveyed to Arbroath. He therefore wished each man to consider for himself how far it would be proper, by any unreasonableness of conduct, to place themselves in a similar situation, especially as they were aware that it was optional in him either to dismiss them or send them on board a man-of-war. It might appear that much inconvenience would be felt at the rock by a change of hands at this critical period, by checking for a time the progress of a building so intimately connected with the best interests of navigation; yet this would be but of a temporary nature, while the injury to themselves might be irreparable. It was now, therefore, required of any man who, in this disgraceful manner, chose to leave the service, that he should instantly make his appearance on deck while the *Smeaton's* boat was alongside. But those below having expressed themselves satisfied with their situation—viz., William Brown, George Gibb, Alexander Scott, John Dick, Robert Couper, Alexander Shephard, James Grieve, David Carey, William Pearson, Stuart Eaton, Alexander Lawrence, and John Spink—were accordingly considered as having returned to their duty. This disposition to mutiny, which had so strongly manifested itself, being now happily suppressed, Captain Pool got orders to proceed for Arbroath Bay, and land the two men he had on board, and to deliver the following letter at the office of the workyard:

"On board of the Tender off the Bell Rock,
22d June, 1810, *eight o'clock p. m.*

"Dear Sir—A discontented and mutinous spirit having manifested itself of late among the landing-master's crew, they struck work to-day, and demanded an additional allowance of beer, and I have found it necessary to dismiss D——d and M——e, who are now sent on shore with the *Smeaton.* You will therefore be so good as to pay them

their wages, including this day only. Nothing can be more unreasonable than the conduct of the seamen on this occasion, as the landing-master's crew not only had their own allowance on board of the tender, but, in the course of this day, they had drawn no fewer than twenty-four quart pots of beer from the stock of the *Patriot* while unloading her. I remain, yours truly,

"ROBERT STEVENSON.

"TO MR. LACHLAN KENNEDY,
Bell Rock Office, Arbroath."

On despatching this letter to Mr. Kennedy, the writer returned to the beacon about nine o'clock, where this afternoon's business had produced many conjectures, especially when the *Smeaton* got under way, instead of proceeding to land her cargo. The bell on the beacon being rung, the artificers were assembled on the bridge, when the affair was explained to them. He, at the same time, congratulated them upon the first appearance of mutiny being happily set at rest by the dismissal of its two principal abettors.

Sunday, 24th June.—At the rock, the landing of the materials and the building operations of the light-room store went on successfully, and in a way similar to those of the provision store. To-day it blew fresh breezes; but the seamen nevertheless landed twenty-eight stones, and the artificers built the fifty-eighth and fifty-ninth courses. The works were visited by Mr. Murdoch, junior, from Messrs. Boulton and Watt's works of Soho. He landed just as the bell rung for prayers, after which the writer enjoyed much pleasure from his very intelligent conversation; and, having been almost the only stranger he had seen for some weeks, he parted with him, after a short interview, with much regret.

Thursday, 28th June.—Last night the wind had shifted to northeast, and, blowing fresh, was accompanied with a heavy surf upon the rock. Toward high-water it had a very grand and wonderful appearance. Waves of considerable magnitude rose as high as the solid or level of the entrance-door, which, being open to the southwest,

was fortunately to the leeward; but on the windward side the sprays flew like lightning up the sloping sides of the building; and although the walls were now elevated sixty-four feet above the rock, and about fifty-two feet from high-water mark, yet the artificers were nevertheless wetted, and occasionally interrupted, in their operations on the top of the walls. These appearances were in a great measure new at the Bell Rock, there having till of late been no building to conduct the seas, or object to compare with them. Although, from the description of the Eddystone Lighthouse, the mind was prepared for such effects, yet they were not expected to the present extent in the summer season; the sea being most awful today, whether observed from the beacon or the building. To windward, the sprays fell from the height above noticed in the most wonderful cascades, and streamed down the walls of the building in froth as white as snow. To leeward of the lighthouse the collision or meeting of the waves produced a pure white kind of *drift;* it rose about thirty feet in height, like a fine downy mist, which, in its fall, felt upon the face and hands more like a dry powder than a liquid substance. The effects of these seas, as they raged among the beams and dashed upon the higher parts of the beacon, produced a temporary tremulous motion throughout the whole fabric, which to a stranger must have been frightful.

Sunday, 1st July.—The writer had now been at the Bell Rock since the latter end of May, or about six weeks, during four of which he had been a constant inhabitant of the beacon without having been once off the rock. After witnessing the laying of the sixty-seventh or second course of the bedroom apartment, he left the rock with the tender and went ashore, as some arrangements were to be made for the future conduct of the works at Arbroath, which were soon to be brought to a close; the landing-master's crew having, in the mean time, shifted on board of the *Patriot.* In leaving the rock, the writer kept his eyes fixed upon the lighthouse, which had recently got into the form of a house, having several tiers or stories of windows. Nor was he unmindful of his habitation in

the beacon—now far overtopped by the masonry—where he had spent several weeks in a kind of active retirement, making practical experiment of the fewness of the positive wants of man. His cabin measured not more than four feet three inches in breadth on the floor; and though, from the oblique direction of the beams of the beacon, it widened toward the top, yet it did not admit of the full extension of his arms when he stood on the floor; while its length was little more than sufficient for suspending a cot-bed during the night, calculated for being triced up to the roof through the day, which left free room for the admission of occasional visitants. His folding table was attached with hinges, immediately under the small window of the apartment, and his books, barometer, thermometer, portmanteau, and two or three camp-stools, formed the bulk of his movables. His diet being plain, the paraphernalia of the table were proportionally simple; though everything had the appearance of comfort, and even of neatness, the walls being covered with green cloth formed into panels with red tape, and his bed festooned with curtains of yellow cotton-stuff. If, in speculating upon the abstract wants of man in such a state of exclusion, one were reduced to a single book, the Sacred Volume—whether considered for the striking diversity of its story, the morality of its doctrine, or the important truths of its gospel—would have proved by far the greatest treasure.

Monday, 2d July.—In walking over the workyard at Arbroath this morning, the writer found that the stones of the course immediately under the cornice were all in hand, and that a week's work would now finish the whole, while the intermediate courses lay ready numbered and marked for shipping to the rock. Among other subjects which had occupied his attention to-day was a visit from some of the relations of George Dall, a young man who had been impressed near Dundee in the month of February last; a dispute had arisen between the magistrates of that burgh and the Regulating Officer as to his right of impressing Dall, who was *bona fide* one of the protected seamen in the Bell Rock service. In the mean time, the poor lad was detained, and ultimately committed to the

prison of Dundee, to remain until the question should be tried before the Court of Session. His friends were naturally very desirous to have him relieved upon bail. But, as this was only to be done by the judgment of the Court, all that could be said was that his pay and allowances should be continued in the same manner as if he had been upon the sick-list. The circumstances of Dall's case were briefly these:—He had gone to see some of his friends in the neighborhood of Dundee, in winter, while the works were suspended, having got leave of absence from Mr. Taylor, who commanded the Bell Rock tender, and had in his possession one of the Protection Medals. Unfortunately, however, for Dall, the Regulating Officer thought proper to disregard these documents, as, according to the strict and literal interpretation of the Admiralty regulations, a seaman does not stand protected unless he is actually on board of his ship, or in a boat belonging to her, or has the Admiralty protection in his possession. This order of the Board, however, can not be rigidly followed in practise; and therefore, when the matter is satisfactorily stated to the Regulating Officer, the impressed man is generally liberated. But in Dall's case this was peremptorily refused, and he was retained at the instance of the magistrates. The writer having brought the matter under the consideration of the Commissioners of the Northern Lighthouses, they authorized it to be tried on the part of the Lighthouse Board, as one of extreme hardship. The Court, upon the first hearing, ordered Dall to be liberated from prison; and the proceedings never went further.

Wednesday, 4th July.—Being now within twelve courses of being ready for building the cornice, measures were taken for getting the stones of it and the parapet-wall of the light-room brought from Edinburgh, where, as before noticed, they had been prepared and were in readiness for shipping. The honor of conveying the upper part of the lighthouse, and of landing the last stone of the building on the rock, was considered to belong to Captain Pool of the *Smeaton,* who had been longer in the service than the master of the *Patriot.* The *Smeaton* was,

therefore, now partly loaded with old iron, consisting of broken railways and other lumber which had been lying about the rock. After landing these at Arbroath, she took on board James Craw, with his horse and cart, which could now be spared at the workyard, to be employed in carting the stones from Edinburgh to Leith. Alexander Davidson and William Kennedy, two careful masons, were also sent to take charge of the loading of the stones at Greenside and stowing them on board of the vessel at Leith. The writer also went on board, with a view to call at the Bell Rock and to take his passage up the Firth of Forth. The wind, however, coming to blow very fresh from the eastward, with thick and foggy weather, it became necessary to reef the mainsail and set the second jib. When in the act of making a tack toward the tender, the sailors who worked the head-sheets were, all of a sudden, alarmed with the sound of a smith's hammer and anvil on the beacon, and had just time to put the ship about to save her from running ashore on the northwestern point of the rock, marked "James Craw's Horse." On looking toward the direction from whence the sound came, the building and beacon-house were seen, with consternation, while the ship was hailed by those on the rock, who were no less confounded at seeing the near approach of the *Smeaton;* and, just as the vessel cleared the danger, the smith and those in the mortar gallery made signs in token of their happiness at our fortunate escape. From this occurrence the writer had an experimental proof of the utility of the large bells which were in preparation to be rung by the machinery of the revolving light; for had it not been for the sound of the smith's anvil, the *Smeaton*, in all probability, would have been wrecked upon the rock. In case the vessel had struck, those on board might have been safe, having now the beacon-house as a place of refuge; but the vessel, which was going at a great velocity, must have suffered severely, and it was more than probable that the horse would have been drowned, there being no means of getting him out of the vessel. Of this valuable animal and his master we shall take an opportunity of saying more in another place.

Thursday, 5th July.—The weather cleared up in the course of the night, but the wind shifted to the N.E. and blew very fresh. From the force of the wind, being now the period of spring-tides, a very heavy swell was experienced at the rock. At two o'clock on the following morning the people on the beacon were in a state of great alarm about their safety, as the sea had broke up part of the floor of the mortar gallery, which was thus cleared of the lime-casks and other buoyant articles; and, the alarm-bell being rung, all hands were called to render what assistance was in their power for the safety of themselves and the materials. At this time some would willingly have left the beacon and gone into the building: the sea, however, ran so high that there was no passage along the bridge of communication, and, when the interior of the lighthouse came to be examined in the morning, it appeared that great quantities of water had come over the walls—now eighty feet in height—and had run down through the several apartments and out at the entrance door.

The upper course of the lighthouse at the workyard of Arbroath was completed on the 6th, and the whole of the stones were, therefore, now ready for being shipped to the rock. From the present state of the work it was impossible that the two squads of artificers at Arbroath and the Bell Rock could meet together at this period; and as in public works of this kind, which had continued for a series of years, it is not customary to allow the men to separate without what is termed a "finishing-pint," five guineas were for this purpose placed at the disposal of Mr. David Logan, clerk of works. With this sum the stone-cutters at Arbroath had a merry meeting in their barrack, collected their sweethearts and friends, and concluded their labors with a dance. It was remarked, however, that their happiness on this occasion was not without alloy. The consideration of parting and leaving a steady and regular employment, to go in quest of work and mix with other society, after having been harmoniously lodged for years together in one large "guildhall or barrack," was rather painful.

Friday, 6th July.—While the writer was at Edinburgh he was fortunate enough to meet with Mrs. Dickson, only daughter of the late celebrated Mr. Smeaton, whose works at the Eddystone Lighthouse had been of such essential consequence to the operations at the Bell Rock. Even her own elegant accomplishments are identified with her father's work, she having herself made the drawing of the vignette on the title-page of the *Narrative of the Eddystone Lighthouse.* Every admirer of the works of that singularly eminent man must also feel an obligation to her for the very comprehensive and distinct account given of his life, which is attached to his reports, published, in three volumes quarto, by the Society of Civil Engineers. Mrs. Dickson, being at this time returning from a tour to the Hebrides and Western Highlands of Scotland, had heard of the Bell Rock works, and from their similarity to those of the Eddystone, was strongly impressed with a desire of visiting the spot. But on inquiring for the writer at Edinburgh, and finding from him that the upper part of the lighthouse, consisting of nine courses, might be seen in the immediate vicinity, and also that one of the vessels, which, in compliment to her father's memory, had been named the *Smeaton,* might also now be seen in Leith, she considered herself extremely fortunate; and having first visited the works at Greenside, she afterward went to Leith to see the *Smeaton,* then loading for the Bell Rock. On stepping on board, Mrs. Dickson seemed to be quite overcome with so many concurrent circumstances, tending in a peculiar manner to revive and enliven the memory of her departed father, and on leaving the vessel she would not be restrained from presenting the crew with a piece of money. The *Smeaton* had been named spontaneously, from a sense of the obligation which a public work of the description of the Bell Rock owed to the labors and abilities of Mr. Smeaton. The writer certainly never could have anticipated the satisfaction which he this day felt in witnessing the pleasure it afforded to the only representative of this great man's family.

Friday, 20th July.—The gale from the N.E. still continued so strong, accompanied with a heavy sea, that the

Patriot could not approach her moorings; and although the tender still kept her station, no landing was made to-day at the rock. At high-water it was remarked that the spray rose to the height of about sixty feet upon the building. The *Smeaton* now lay in Leith loaded, but, the wind and weather being so unfavorable for her getting down the Firth, she did not sail till this afternoon. It may here be proper to notice that the loading of the center of the light-room floor, or last principal stone of the building, did not fail, when put on board, to excite an interest among those connected with the work. When the stone was laid upon the cart to be conveyed to Leith, the seamen fixed an ensign-staff and flag into the circular hole in the center of the stone, and decorated their own hats, and that of James Craw, the Bell Rock carter, with ribbons; even his faithful and trusty horse Bassey was ornamented with bows and streamers of various colors. The masons also provided themselves with new aprons, and in this manner the cart was attended in its progress to the ship. When the cart came opposite the Trinity House of Leith, the officer of that Corporation made his appearance dressed in his uniform, with his staff of office; and when it reached the harbor, the shipping in the different tiers where the *Smeaton* lay hoisted their colors, manifesting by these trifling ceremonies the interest with which the progress of this work was regarded by the public, as ultimately tending to afford safety and protection to the mariner. The wind had fortunately shifted to the S.W., and about five o'clock this afternoon the *Smeaton* reached the Bell Rock.

Friday, 27th July.—The artificers had finished the laying of the balcony course, excepting the center-stone of the light-room floor, which, like the centers of the other floors, could not be laid in its place till after the removal of the foot and shaft of the balance-crane. During the dinner-hour, when the men were off work, the writer generally took some exercise by walking round the walls when the rock was under water; but to-day his boundary was greatly enlarged, for, instead of the narrow wall as a path, he felt no small degree of pleasure in walking

round the balcony and passing out and in at the space allotted for the light-room door. In the labors of this day both the artificers and seamen felt their work to be extremely easy compared with what it had been for some days past.

Sunday, 29th July.—Captain Wilson and his crew had made preparations for landing the last stone, and, as may well be supposed, this was a day of great interest at the Bell Rock. "That it might lose none of its honors," as he expressed himself, the *Hedderwick* praam-boat, with which the first stone of the building had been landed, was appointed also to carry the last. At seven o'clock this evening the seamen hoisted three flags upon the *Hedderwick,* when the colors of the *Dickie* praam-boat, tender, *Smeaton,* floating light, beacon-house, and lighthouse, were also displayed; and, the weather being remarkably fine, the whole presented a very gay appearance, and, in connection with the associations excited, the effect was very pleasing. The praam which carried the stone was towed by the seamen in gallant style to the rock, and, on its arrival, cheers were given as a finale to the landing department.

Monday, 30th July.—The ninetieth or last course of the building having been laid to-day, which brought the masonry to the height of one hundred and two feet six inches, the lintel of the light-room door, being the finishing-stone of the exterior walls, was laid with due formality by the writer, who, at the same time, pronounced the following benediction: "May the Great Architect of the Universe, under whose blessing this perilous work has prospered, preserve it as a guide to the mariner."

Friday, 3d Aug.—At three P. M., the necessary preparations having been made, the artificers commenced the completing of the floors of the several apartments, and at seven o'clock the center stone of the light-room floor was laid, which may be held as finishing the masonry of this important national edifice. After going through the usual ceremonies observed by the brotherhood on occasions of this kind, the writer, addressing himself to the artificers and seamen who were present, briefly alluded to the utility

of the undertaking as a monument of the wealth of British commerce, erected through the spirited measures of the Commissioners of the Northern Lighthouses by means of the able assistance of those who now surrounded him. He then took an opportunity of stating that toward those connected with this arduous work he would ever retain the most heartfelt regard in all their interests.

Saturday, 4th Aug.—When the bell was rung as usual on the beacon this morning, every one seemed as if he were at a loss what to make of himself. At this period the artificers at the rock consisted of eighteen masons, two joiners, one millwright, one smith, and one mortar-maker, besides Messrs. Peter Logan and Francis Watt, foremen, counting in all twenty-five; and matters were arranged for proceeding to Arbroath this afternoon with all hands. The *Sir Joseph Banks* tender had by this time been afloat, with little intermission, for six months, during the greater part of which the artificers had been almost constantly off at the rock, and were now much in want of necessaries of almost every description. Not a few had lost different articles of clothing, which had dropped into the sea from the beacon and building. Some wanted jackets; others, from want of hats, wore nightcaps; each was, in fact, more or less curtailed in his wardrobe, and, it must be confessed, that at best the party were but in a very tattered condition. This morning was occupied in removing the artificers and their bedding on board of the tender; and, although their personal luggage was easily shifted, the boats had, nevertheless, many articles to remove from the beacon-house, and were consequently employed in this service till eleven A. M. All hands being collected and just ready to embark, as the water had nearly overflowed the rock, the writer, in taking leave, after alluding to the harmony which had ever marked the conduct of these employed on the Bell Rock, took occasion to compliment the great zeal, attention, and abilities of Mr. Peter Logan and Mr. Francis Watt, foremen; Captain James Wilson, landing-master; and Captain David Taylor, commander of the tender, who, in their several departments, had so faithfully discharged the duties assigned to them, often under circumstances

the most difficult and trying. The health of these gentlemen was drunk with much warmth of feeling by the artificers and seamen, who severally expressed the satisfaction they had experienced in acting under them; after which the whole party left the rock.

In sailing past the floating light mutual compliments were made by a display of flags between that vessel and the tender; and at five P. M. the latter vessel entered the harbor of Arbroath, where the party were heartily welcomed by a numerous company of spectators, who had collected to see the artificers arrive after so long an absence from the port. In the evening the writer invited the foremen and captains of the service, together with Mr. David Logan, clerk of works at Arbroath, and Mr. Lachlan Kennedy, engineer's clerk and bookkeeper, and some of their friends, to the principal inn, where the evening was spent very happily; and after "His Majesty's Health" and "The Commissioners of the Northern Lighthouses" had been given, "Stability to the Bell Rock Lighthouse" was hailed as a standing toast in the Lighthouse Service.

Sunday, 5th Aug.—The author has formerly noticed the uniformly decent and orderly deportment of the artificers who were employed at the Bell Rock Lighthouse, and to-day, it is believed, they very generally attended church, no doubt with grateful hearts for the narrow escapes from personal danger which all of them had more or less experienced during their residence at the rock.

Tuesday, 14th Aug.—The *Smeaton* sailed to-day at one P. M., having on board sixteen artificers, with Mr. Peter Logan, together with a supply of provisions and necessaries, who left the harbor pleased and happy to find themselves once more afloat in the Bell Rock service. At seven o'clock the tender was made fast to her moorings, when the artificers landed on the rock and took possession of their old quarters in the beacon-house, with feelings very different from those of 1807, when the works commenced.

The barometer for some days past had been falling from 20.90, and to-day it was 29.50, with the wind at N.E., which, in the course of this day, increased to a strong gale accompanied with a sea which broke with great

violence upon the rock. At twelve noon the tender rode very heavily at her moorings, when her chain broke at about ten fathoms from the ship's bows. The kedge-anchor was immediately let go, to hold her till the floating buoy and broken chain should be got on board. But while this was in operation the hawser of the kedge was chafed through on the rocky bottom and parted, when the vessel was again adrift. Most fortunately, however, she cast off with her head from the rock, and narrowly cleared it, when she sailed up the Firth of Forth to wait the return of better weather. The artificers were thus left upon the rock with so heavy a sea running that it was ascertained to have risen to the height of eighty feet on the building. Under such perilous circumstances it would be difficult to describe the feelings of those who, at this time, were cooped up in the beacon in so forlorn a situation, with the sea not only raging under them, but occasionally falling from a great height upon the roof of their temporary lodging, without even the attending vessel in view to afford the least gleam of hope in the event of any accident. It is true that they had now the masonry of the light-house to resort to, which, no doubt, lessened the actual danger of their situation; but the building was still without a roof, and the dead-lights, or storm-shutters, not being yet fitted, the windows of the lower story were stove in and broken, and at high-water the sea ran in considerable quantities out at the entrance door.

Thursday, 16*th Aug.*—The gale continues with unabated violence to-day, and the sprays rise to a still greater height, having been carried over the masonry of the building, or about ninety feet above the level of the sea. At four o'clock this morning it was breaking into the cook's berth, when he rang the alarm-bell, and all hands turned out to attend to their personal safety. The floor of the smith's, or mortar-gallery, was now completely burst up by the force of the sea, when the whole of the deals and the remaining articles upon the floor were swept away, such as the cast-iron mortar-tubs, the iron hearth of the forge, the smith's bellows, and even his anvil were thrown down upon the rock. Before the tide rose to its full

height to-day some of the artificers passed along the bridge into the lighthouse, to observe the effects of the sea upon it, and they reported that they had felt a slight tremulous motion in the building when great seas struck it in a certain direction, about high-water mark. On this occasion the sprays were again observed to wet the balcony, and even to come over the parapet wall into the interior of the light-room.

Thursday, 23d Aug.—The wind being at W.S.W., and the weather more moderate, both the tender and the *Smeaton* got to their moorings on the 23d, when all hands were employed in transporting the sash-frames from on board of the *Smeaton* to the rock. In the act of setting up one of these frames upon the bridge, it was unguardedly suffered to lose its balance, and in saving it from damage, Captain Wilson met with a severe bruise in the groin, on the seat of a gunshot wound received in the early part of his life. This accident laid him aside for several days.

Monday, 27th Aug.—The sash-frames of the light-room, eight in number, and weighing each 254 pounds, having been got safely up to the top of the building, were ranged on the balcony in the order in which they were numbered for their places on the top of the parapet-wall; and the balance-crane, that useful machine having now lifted all the heavier articles, was unscrewed and lowered, to use the landing-master's phrase, "in mournful silence."

Sunday, 2d Sept.—The steps of the stair being landed, and all the weightier articles of the light-room got up to the balcony, the wooden bridge was now to be removed, as it had a very powerful effect upon the beacon when a heavy sea struck it, and could not possibly have withstood the storms of a winter. Everything having been cleared from the bridge, and nothing left but the two principal beams with their horizontal braces, James Glen, at high-water, proceeded with a saw to cut through the beams at the end next the beacon, which likewise disengaged their opposite extremity, inserted a few inches into the building. The frame was then gently lowered into the water, and floated off to the *Smeaton* to be towed to Arbroath,

to be applied as part of the materials in the erection of the lightkeepers' houses. After the removal of the bridge, the aspect of things at the rock was much altered. The beacon-house and building had both a naked look to those accustomed to their former appearance; a curious optical deception was also remarked, by which the lighthouse seemed to incline from the perpendicular toward the beacon. The horizontal rope-ladder before noticed was again stretched to preserve the communication, and the artificers were once more obliged to practise the awkward and straddling manner of their passage between them during 1809.

At twelve noon the bell rung for prayers, after which the artificers went to dinner, when the writer passed along the rope ladder to the lighthouse, and went through the several apartments, which were now cleared of lumber. In the afternoon all hands were summoned to the interior of the house, when he had the satisfaction of laying the upper step of the stair, or last stone of the building. This ceremony concluded with three cheers, the sound of which had a very loud and strange effect within the walls of the lighthouse. At six o'clock Mr. Peter Logan and eleven of the artificers embarked with the writer for Arbroath, leaving Mr. James Glen with the special charge of the beacon and railways, Mr. Robert Selkirk with the building, with a few artificers to fit the temporary windows to render the house habitable.

Sunday, 14th Oct.—On returning from his voyage to the Northern Lighthouses, the writer landed at the Bell Rock on Sunday, the 14th of October, and had the pleasure to find, from the very favorable state of the weather, that the artificers had been enabled to make great progress with the fitting up of the light-room.

Friday, 19th Oct.—The light-room work had proceeded, as usual, to-day under the direction of Mr. Dove, assisted in the plumber-work by Mr. John Gibson, and in the brazier work by Mr. Joseph Fraser; while Mr. James Slight, with the joiners, were fitting up the storm-shutters of the windows. In these several departments the artificers were at work till seven o'clock P. M., and it being then dark, Mr. Dove gave orders to drop work in

the light-room; and all hands proceeded from thence to the beacon-house, when Charles Henderson, smith, and Henry Dickson, brazier, left the work together. Being both young men, who had been for several weeks upon the rock, they had become familiar, and even playful, on the most difficult parts about the beacon and building. This evening they were trying to outrun each other in descending from the light-room, when Henderson led the way; but they were in conversation with each other till they came to the rope-ladder distended between the entrance-door of the lighthouse and the beacon. Dickson, on reaching the cook-room, was surprised at not seeing his companion, and inquired hastily for Henderson. Upon which the cook replied, "Was he before you upon the rope-ladder?" Dickson answered, "Yes; and I thought I heard something fall." Upon this the alarm was given, and links were immediately lighted, with which the artificers descended on the legs of the beacon, as near the surface of the water as possible, it being then about full-tide, and the sea breaking to a considerable height upon the building, with the wind at S.S.E. But, after watching till low-water, and searching in every direction upon the rock, it appeared that poor Henderson must have unfortunately fallen through the rope-ladder, and been washed into the deep water.

The deceased had passed along this rope-ladder many hundred times, both by day and night, and the operations in which he was employed being nearly finished, he was about to leave the rock when this melancholy catastrophe took place. The unfortunate loss of Henderson cast a deep gloom upon the minds of all who were at the rock, and it required some management on the part of those who had charge to induce the people to remain patiently at their work; as the weather now became more boisterous, and the nights long, they found their habitation extremely cheerless, while the winds were howling about their ears, and the waves lashing with fury against the beams of their insulated habitation.

Tuesday, 23d Oct.—The wind had shifted in the night to N.W., and blew a fresh gale, while the sea broke with

violence upon the rock. It was found impossible to land, but the writer, from the boat, hailed Mr. Dove, and directed the ball to be immediately fixed. The necessary preparations were accordingly made, while the vessel made short tacks on the southern side of the rock, in comparatively smooth water. At noon Mr. Dove, assisted by Mr. James Slight, Mr. Robert Selkirk, Mr. James Glen, and Mr. John Gibson, plumber, with considerable difficulty, from the boisterous state of the weather, got the gilded ball screwed on, measuring two feet in diameter, and forming the principal ventilator at the upper extremity of the cupola of the light-room. At Mr. Hamilton's desire, a salute of seven guns was fired on this occasion, and, all hands being called to the quarter-deck, "Stability to the Bell Rock Lighthouse" was not forgotten.

Tuesday, 30th Oct.—On reaching the rock it was found that a very heavy sea still ran upon it; but the writer having been disappointed on two former occasions, and, as the erection of the house might now be considered complete, there being nothing wanted externally, excepting some of the storm-shutters for the defense of the windows, he was the more anxious at this time to inspect it. Two well-manned boats were therefore ordered to be in attendance; and, after some difficulty, the wind being at N.N.E., they got safely into the western creek, though not without encountering plentiful sprays. It would have been impossible to have attempted a landing to-day, under any other circumstances than with boats perfectly adapted to the purpose, and with seamen who knew every ledge of the rock, and even the length of the sea-weeds at each particular spot, so as to dip their oars into the water accordingly, and thereby prevent them from getting entangled. But what was of no less consequence to the safety of the party, Captain Wilson, who always steered the boat, had a perfect knowledge of the set of the different waves, while the crew never shifted their eyes from observing his motions, and the strictest silence was preserved by every individual except himself.

On entering the house, the writer had the pleasure to

find it in a somewhat habitable condition, the lower apartments being closed in with temporary windows, and fitted with proper storm-shutters. The lowest apartment at the head of the staircase was occupied with water, fuel, and provisions, put up in a temporary way until the house could be furnished with proper utensils. The second, or light-room store, was at present much encumbered with various tools and apparatus for the use of the workmen. The kitchen immediately over this had, as yet, been supplied only with a common ship's caboose and plate-iron funnel, while the necessary cooking utensils had been taken from the beacon. The bedroom was for the present used as the joiners' workshop, and the strangers' room, immediately under the light-room, was occupied by the artificers, the beds being ranged in tiers, as was done in the barrack of the beacon. The light-room, though unprovided with its machinery, being now covered over with the cupola, glazed and painted, had a very complete and cleanly appearance. The balcony was only as yet fitted with a temporary rail, consisting of a few iron stanchions, connected with ropes; and in this state it was necessary to leave it during the winter.

Having gone over the whole of the low-water works on the rock, the beacon, and lighthouse, and being satisfied that only the most untoward accident in the landing of the machinery could prevent the exhibition of the light in the course of the winter, Mr. John Reid, formerly of the floating light, was now put in charge of the lighthouse as principal keeper; Mr. James Slight had charge of the operations of the artificers, while Mr. James Dove and the smiths, having finished the frame of the light-room, left the rock for the present. With these arrangements the writer bade adieu to the works for the season. At eleven A. M. the tide was far advanced; and there being now little or no shelter for the boats at the rock, they had to be pulled through the breach of sea, which came on board in great quantities, and it was with extreme difficulty that they could be kept in the proper direction of the landing-creek. On this occasion he may be permitted to look back with gratitude on the many escapes made in

the course of this arduous undertaking, now brought so near to a successful conclusion.

Monday, 5th Nov.—On Monday, the 5th, the yacht again visited the rock, when Mr. Slight and the artificers returned with her to the workyard, where a number of things were still to prepare connected with the temporary fitting up of the accommodation for the lightkeepers. Mr. John Reid and Peter Fortune were now the only inmates of the house. This was the smallest number of persons hitherto left in the lighthouse. As four lightkeepers were to be the complement, it was intended that three should always be at the rock. Its present inmates, however, could hardly have been better selected for such a situation; Mr. Reid being a person possessed of the strictest notions of duty and habits of regularity from long service on board of a man-of-war, while Mr. Fortune had one of the most happy and contented dispositions imaginable.

Tuesday, 13th Nov.—From Saturday the 10th till Tuesday the 13th, the wind had been from N.E. blowing a heavy gale; but to-day, the weather having greatly moderated, Captain Taylor, who now commanded the *Smeaton,* sailed at two o'clock A. M. for the Bell Rock. At five the floating light was hailed and found to be all well. Being a fine moonlight morning, the seamen were changed from the one ship to the other. At eight, the *Smeaton* being off the rock, the boats were manned, and taking a supply of water, fuel, and other necessaries, landed at the western side, when Mr. Reid and Mr. Fortune were found in good health and spirits.

Mr. Reid stated that during the late gales, particularly on Friday, the 30th, the wind veering from S.E. to N.E., both he and Mr. Fortune sensibly felt the house tremble when particular seas struck, about the time of high-water; the former observing that it was a tremor of that sort which rather tended to convince him that everything about the building was sound, and reminded him of the effect produced when a good log of timber is struck sharply with a mallet; but, with every confidence in the stability of the building, he nevertheless confessed that, in so forlorn a situation, they were not insensible to those emotions

which, he emphatically observed, "made a man look back upon his former life."

Friday, 1st Feb.—The day, long wished for, on which the mariner was to see a light exhibited on the Bell Rock at length arrived. Captain Wilson, as usual, hoisted the float's lanterns to the topmast on the evening of the 1st of February; but the moment that the light appeared on the rock, the crew giving three cheers, lowered them, and finally extinguished the lights.

POEMS AND BALLADS

DEDICATION

There are men and classes of men that stand above the common herd: the soldier, the sailor, and the shepherd not infrequently; the artist rarely; rarelier still, the clergyman; the physician almost as a rule. He is the flower (such as it is) of our civilization; and when that stage of man is done with, and only remembered to be marveled at in history, he will be thought to have shared as little as any in the defects of the period, and most notably exhibited in the virtues of the race. Generosity he has, such as is possible to those who practise an art, never to those who drive a trade; discretion, tested by a hundred secrets; tact, tried in a thousand embarrassments; and what are more important, Heraclean cheerfulness and courage. So it is that he brings air and cheer into the sick-room, and often enough, though not so often as he wishes, brings healing.

Gratitude is but a lame sentiment; thanks, when they are expressed, are often more embarrassing than welcome; and yet I must set forth mine to a few out of many doctors who have brought me comfort and help: to Dr. Willey of San Francisco, whose kindness to a stranger it must be as grateful to him as it is touching to me, to remember; to Dr. Karl Ruedi of Davos, the good genius of the English in his frosty mountains; to Dr. Herbert of Paris, whom I knew only for a week, and to Dr. Caissot of Montpellier, whom I knew only for ten days, and who have yet written their names deeply in my memory; to Dr. Brandt of Royat; to Dr. Wakefield of Nice; to Dr. Chepmell, whose visits make it a pleasure to be ill; to Dr. Horace Dobell, so wise in counsel; to Sir Andrew Clark, so unwearied in kindness; and to that wise youth, my uncle, Dr. Balfour.

I forget as many as I remember; and I ask both to pardon me, these for silence, those for inadequate speech. But one name I have kept on purpose to the last, because it is a household word with me, and because if I had not

received favors from so many hands and in so many quarters of the world, it should have stood upon this page alone: that of my friend Thomas Bodley Scott of Bournemouth. Will he accept this, although shared among so many, for a dedication to himself? and when next my ill-fortune (which has thus its pleasant side) brings him hurrying to me when he would fain sit down to meat or lie down to rest, will he care to remember that he takes this trouble for one who is not fool enough to be ungrateful?

R. L. S.

Skerryvore,
Bournemouth.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The human conscience has fled of late the troublesome domain of conduct for what I should have supposed to be the less congenial field of art: there she may now be said to rage, and with special severity in all that touches dialect; so that in every novel the letters of the alphabet are tortured, and the reader wearied, to commemorate shades of mispronunciation. Now, spelling is an art of great difficulty in my eyes, and I am inclined to lean upon the printer, even in common practise, rather than to venture abroad upon new quests. And the Scots tongue has an orthography of its own, lacking neither "authority nor author." Yet the temptation is great to lend a little guidance to the bewildered Englishman. Some simple phonetic artifice might defend your verses from barbarous mishandling, and yet not injure any vested interest. So it seems at first; but there are rocks ahead. Thus, if I wish the diphthong ou *to have its proper value, I may write* oor *instead of* our; *many have done so and lived, and the pillars of the universe remained unshaken. But if I did so, and came presently to* doun, *which is the classical Scots spelling of the English* down, *I should begin to feel uneasy; and if I went on a little further, and came to a classical Scots word, like* stour *or* dour *or* clour, *I should know precisely where I was—that is to say, that I was out of sight of land on those high seas of spelling reform in which so many strong swimmers have toiled vainly. To some the situation is exhilarating; as for me, I give one bubbling cry and sink. The compromise at which I have arrived is indefensible, and I have no thought of trying to defend it. As I have stuck for the most part to the proper spelling, I append a table of some common vowel sounds which no one need consult; and just to prove that I belong to my age and have in me the stuff of a reformer, I have used modification marks throughout. Thus I can tell my-*

self, not without pride, that I have added a fresh stumbling-block for English readers, and to a page of print in my native tongue have lent a new uncouthness. Sed non nobis.

I note again, that among our new dialecticians, the local habitat of every dialect is given to the square mile. I could not emulate this nicety if I desired; for I simply wrote my Scots as well as I was able, not caring if it hailed from Lauderdale or Angus, from the Mearns of Galloway; if I had ever heard a good word, I used it without shame; and when Scots was lacking, or the rime jibed, I was glad (like my betters) to fall back on English. For all that, I own to a friendly feeling for the tongue of Fergusson and of Sir Walter, both Edinburgh men; and I confess that Burns has always sounded in my ear like something partly foreign. And indeed I am from the Lothians myself; it is there I heard the language spoken about my childhood; and it is in the drawling Lothian voice that I repeat it to myself. Let the precisians call my speech that of the Lothians. And if it be not pure, alas! what matters it? The day draws near when this illustrious and malleable tongue shall be quite forgotten; and Burns's Ayrshire, and Dr. Macdonald's Aberdeen-awa', and Scott's brave, metropolitan utterance will be all equally the ghosts of speech. Till then I would love to have my hour as a native Maker, and be read by my own country folk in our own dying language: an ambition surely rather of the heart than of the head, so restricted as it is in prospect of endurance, so parochial in bounds of space.

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UNDERWOODS

BOOK I—IN ENGLISH

I

ENVOY

GO, little book, and wish to all
Flowers in the garden, meat in the hall,
A bin of wine, a spice of wit,
A house with lawns inclosing it,
A living river by the door,
A nightingale in the sycamore!

II

A SONG OF THE ROAD

THE gauger walked with willing foot,
And aye the gauger played the flute;
And what should Master Gauger play
But *Over the hills and far away?*

Whene'er I buckle on my pack
And foot it gayly in the track,
O pleasant gauger, long since dead,
I hear you fluting on ahead.

You go with me the self-same way—
The self-same air for me you play;
For I do think and so do you
It is the tune to travel to.

For who would gravely set his face
To go to this or t'other place?
There's nothing under heav'n so blue
That's fairly worth the traveling to.

On every hand the roads begin,
And people walk with zeal therein;
But wheresoe'er the highways tend,
Be sure there's nothing at the end.

Then follow you, wherever hie
The traveling mountains of the sky.
Or let the streams in civil mode
Direct your choice upon a road;

For one and all, or high or low,
Will lead you where you wish to go;
And one and all go night and day
Over the hills and far away!

FOREST OF MONTARGIS, 1878.

III

THE CANOE SPEAKS

ON the great streams the ships may go
About men's business to and fro.
But I, the egg-shell pinnace, sleep
On crystal waters ankle-deep:
I, whose diminutive design,
Of sweeter cedar, pithier pine,
Is fashioned on so frail a mold,
A hand may launch, a hand withhold:
I, rather, with the leaping trout
Wind, among lilies, in and out;
I, the unnamed, inviolate,
Green, rustic rivers navigate;
My dipping paddle scarcely shakes
The berry in the bramble-brakes;

Still forth on my green way I wend
Beside the cottage garden-end;
And by the nested angler fare,
And take the lovers unaware.
By willow wood and water-wheel
Speedily fleets my touching keel;
By all retired and shady spots
Where prosper dim forget-me-nots;
By meadows where at afternoon
The growing maidens troop in June
To loose their girdles on the grass.
Ah! speedier than before the glass
The backward toilet goes; and swift
As swallows quiver, robe and shift
And the rough country stockings lie
Around each young divinity.
When, following the recondite brook,
Sudden upon this scene I look,
And light with unfamiliar face
On chaste Diana's bathing-place,
Loud ring the hills about and all
The shallows are abandoned. . . .

IV

It is the season now to go
About the country high and low,
Among the lilacs hand in hand,
And two by two in fairy land.

The brooding boy, the sighing maid,
Wholly fain and half afraid,
Now meet along the hazel'd brook
To pass and linger, pause and look.

A year ago, and blithely paired,
Their rough-and-tumble play they shared;
They kissed and quarreled, laughed and cried,
A year ago at Eastertide.

With bursting heart, with fiery face,
She strove against him in the race;
He, unabashed, her garter saw
That now would touch her skirts with awe.

Now by the stile ablaze she stops,
And his demurer eyes he drops;
Now they exchange averted sighs
Or stand and marry silent eyes.

And he to her a hero is,
And sweeter she than primroses;
Their common silence dearer far
Than nightingale and mavis are.

Now when they sever wedded hands,
Joy trembles in their bosom-strands,
And lovely laughter leaps and falls
Upon their lips in madrigals.

V

THE HOUSE BEAUTIFUL

A naked house, a naked moor,
A shivering pool before the door,
A garden bare of flowers and fruit,
And poplars at the garden foot:
Such is the place that I live in,
Bleak without and bare within.

Yet shall your ragged moor receive
The incomparable pomp of eve,
And the cold glories of the dawn
Behind your shivering trees be drawn;
And when the wind from place to place
Doth the unmoored cloud-galleons chase,
Your garden gloom and gleam again,
With leaping sun, with glancing rain.

Here shall the wizard moon ascend
The heavens, in the crimson end
Of day's declining splendor; here
The army of the stars appear.
The neighbor hollows dry or wet,
Spring shall with tender flowers beset;
And oft the morning muser see
Larks rising from the broomy lea,
And every fairy wheel and thread
Of cobweb dew-bediamonded.
When daisies go, shall winter time
Silver the simple grass with rime;
Autumnal frosts enchant the pool
And make the cart-ruts beautiful;
And when snow-bright the moor expands
How shall your children clap their hands!
To make this earth our hermitage,
A cheerful and a changeful page.
God's bright and intricate device
Of days and seasons doth suffice.

VI

A VISIT FROM THE SEA

Far from the loud sea beaches
  Where he goes fishing and crying,
Here in the inland garden
  Why is the sea-gull flying?

Here are no fish to dive for;
  Here is the corn and lea;
Here are the green trees rustling.
  Hie away home to sea!

Fresh is the river water
  And quiet among the rushes;
This is no home for the sea-gull
  But for the rooks and thrushes.

Pity the bird that has wandered!
  Pity the sailor ashore!
Hurry him home to the ocean,
  Let him come here no more.

High on the sea-cliff ledges
  The white gulls are trooping and crying.
Here among rooks and roses,
  Why is the sea-gull flying?

VII

TO A GARDENER

Friend, in my mountain side demesne,
My plain-beholding, rosy, green
And linnet-haunted garden-ground,
Let still the esculents abound.
Let first the onion flourish there,
Rose among roots, the maiden-fair,
Wine-scented and poetic soul
Of the capacious salad bowl.
Let thyme the mountaineer (to dress
The tinier birds) and wading cress,
The lover of the shallow brook,
From all my plots and borders look.

Nor crisp and ruddy radish, nor
Pease-cods for the child's pinafore
Be lacking; nor of salad clan
The last and least that ever ran
About great nature's garden-beds.
Nor thence be missed the speary heads
Of artichoke; nor thence the bean
That gathered innocent and green
Outsavors the belauded pea.

These tend, I prithee; and for me,
Thy most long-suffering master, bring
In April, when the linnets sing

And the days lengthen more and more
At sundown to the garden door.
And I, being provided thus,
Shall, with superb asparagus,
A book, a taper, and a cup
Of country wine, divinely sup.

La Solitude, Hyères.

VIII

TO MINNIE

(With a Hand-Glass)

A picture-frame for you to fill,
A paltry setting for your face,
A thing that has no worth until
You lend it something of your grace,

I send (unhappy I that sing
Laid by a while upon the shelf)
Because I would not send a thing
Less charming than you are yourself.

And happier than I, alas!
(Dumb thing, I envy its delight),
'Twill wish you well, the looking-glass,
And look you in the face to-night.

1869.

IX

TO K. de M.

A lover of the moorland bare
And honest country winds, you were;
The silver-skimming rain you took;
And loved the floodings of the brook,
Dew, frost and mountains, fire and seas,
Tumultuary silences,
Winds that in darkness fifed a tune,
And the high-riding virgin moon.

And as the berry, pale and sharp,
Springs on some ditch's counterscarp
In our ungenial, native north—
You put your frosted wildings forth,
And on the heath, afar from man,
A strong and bitter virgin ran.

The berry ripened keeps the rude
And racy flavor of the wood;
And you that loved the empty plain
All redolent of wind and rain,
Around you still the curlew sings—
The freshness of the weather clings—
The maiden jewels of the rain
Sit in your dabbled locks again.

X

TO N. V. de G. S.

The unfathomable sea, and time, and tears,
The deeds of heroes and the crimes of kings
Dispart us; and the river of events
Has, for an age of years, to east and west
More widely borne our cradles. Thou to me
Art foreign, as when seamen at the dawn
Descry a land far off and know not which.
So I approach uncertain; so I cruise
Round thy mysterious islet, and behold
Surf and great mountains and loud river-bars,
And from the shore hear inland voices call.
Strange is the seaman's heart; he hopes, he fears;
Draws closer and sweeps wider from that coast;
Last, his rent sail refits, and to the deep
His shattered prow uncomforted puts back.
Yet as he goes he ponders at the helm
Of that bright island; where he feared to touch,
His spirit re-adventures; and for years,
Where by his wife he slumbers safe at home,

Thoughts of that land revisit him; he sees
The eternal mountains beckon, and awakes
Yearning for that far home that might have been.

XI

TO WILL H. LOW

YOUTH now flees on feathered foot
Faint and fainter sounds the flute,
Rarer songs of gods; and still
Somewhere on the sunny hill,
Or along the winding stream,
Through the willows, flits a dream;
Flits, but shows a smiling face,
Flees, but with so quaint a grace,
None can choose to stay at home,
All must follow, all must roam.
This is unborn beauty: she
Now in air floats high and free,
Takes the sun and breaks the blue;—
Late with stooping pinion flew
Raking hedgerow trees, and wet
Her wing in silver streams, and set
Shining foot on temple roof:
Now again she flies aloof,
Coasting mountain clouds and kiss't
By the evening's amethyst.

In wet wood and miry lane,
Still we pant and pound in vain;
Still with leaden foot we chase
Waning pinion, fainting face;
Still with gray hair we stumble on,
Till, behold, the vision gone!
Where hath fleeting beauty led?
To the doorway of the dead.
Life is over, life was gay:
We have come the primrose way.

XII

TO MRS. WILL H. LOW

Even in the bluest noonday of July,
There could not run the smallest breath of wind
But all the quarter sounded like a wood;
And in the checkered silence and above
The hum of city cabs that sought the Bois,
Suburban ashes shivered into song.
A patter and a chatter and a chirp
And a long-dying hiss—it was as though
Starched old brocaded dames through all the house
Had trailed a strident skirt, or the whole sky
Even in a wink had over-brimmed in rain.
Hark, in these shady parlors, how it talks
Of the near autumn, how smitten ash
Trembles and augurs floods! O not too long
In these inconstant latitudes delay,
O not too late from the unbeloved north
Trim your escape! For soon shall this low roof
Resound indeed with rain, soon shall your eyes
Search the foul garden, search the darkened rooms,
Nor find one jewel but the blazing log.

12 Rue Vernier, Paris.

XIII

TO H. F. BROWN

(Written During a Dangerous Sickness)

I sit and wait a pair of oars
On cis-Elysian river-shores.
Where the immortal dead have sate,
'Tis mine to sit and meditate;
To re-ascend life's rivulet,
Without remorse, without regret;
And sing my *Alma Genetrix*
Among the willows of the Styx.

And lo, as my serener soul
Did these unhappy shores patrol,
And wait with an attentive ear
The coming of the gondolier,
Your fire-surviving roll I took,
Your spirited and happy book;[1]
Whereon, despite my frowning fate,
It did my soul so recreate
That all my fancies fled away
On a Venetian holiday.

Now, thanks to your triumphant care,
Your pages clear as April air,
The sails, the bells, the birds, I know,
And the far-off Friulan snow;
The land and sea, the sun and shade,
And the blue even lamp-inlaid:
For this, for these, for all, O friend,
For your whole book from end to end—
For Paron Piero's muttonham—
I your defaulting debtor am.

Perchance, reviving, yet may I
To your sea-paven city hie,
And in a *felze,* some day yet
Light at your pipe my cigarette.

XIV

TO ANDREW LANG

Dear Andrew, with the brindled hair,
Who glory to have thrown in air
High over arm, the trembling reed,
By Ale and Kail, by Till and Tweed;
An equal craft of hand you show

[1] "Life on the Lagoons," by H. F. Brown, originally burned in the fire at Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench & Co.'s.

The pen to guide, the fly to throw;
I count you happy starred; for God,
When He with inkpot and with rod
Endowed you, bade your fortune lead
Forever by the crooks of Tweed,
Forever by the woods of song
And lands that to the Muse belong;
Or if in peopled streets, or in
The abhorred pedantic sanhedrim,
It should be yours to wander, still
Airs of the morn, airs of the hill,
The plovery Forest and the seas
That break about the Hebrides,
Should follow over field and plain
And find you at the window-pane;
And you again see hill and peel,
And the bright springs gush at your heel.
So went the fiat forth, and so
Garrulous like a brook you go,
With sound of happy mirth and sheen
Of daylight—whether by the green
You fare that moment, or the gray;
Whether you dwell in March or May;
Or whether treat of reels and rods
Or of the old unhappy gods:
Still like a brook your page has shone,
And your ink sings of Helicon.

XV

ET TU IN ARCADIA VIXISTI

(TO R. A. M. S.)

In ancient tales, O friend, thy spirit dwelt;
There, from of old, thy childhood passed; and there
High expectation, high delights and deeds,
Thy fluttering heart with hope and terror moved.
And thou hast heard of yore the Blatant Beast,
And Roland's horn, and that war-scattering shout

Of all-unarmed Achilles, ægis-crowned.
And perilous lands thou sawest, sounding shores
And seas and forests drear, island and dale
And mountain dark. For thou with Tristram rod'st
Or Bedevere, in farthest Lyonesse.
Thou hadst a booth in Samarcand, whereat
Side-looking Magians trafficked; thence, by night,
An Afreet snatched thee, and with wings upbore
Beyond the Aral mount; or hoping gain,
Thou, with a jar of money didst embark
For Balsorah, by sea. But chiefly thou
In that clear air took'st life; in Arcady
The haunted, land of song; and by the wells
Where most the gods frequent. There Chiron old,
In the Pelethronian antre, taught thee lore:
The plants, he taught, and by the shining stars
In forests dim to steer. There hast thou seen
Immortal Pan dance secret in a glade,
And, dancing, roll his eyes; these where they fell,
Shed glee, and through the congregated oaks
A flying horror winged; while all the earth
To the god's pregnant footing thrilled within.
Or whiles, beside the sobbing stream, he breathed,
In his clutched pipe unformed and wizard strains
Divine yet brutal; which the forest heard,
And thou, with awe; and far upon the plain
The unthinking plowman started and gave ear.
Now things there are that, upon him who sees,
A strong vocation lay; and strains there are
That whoso hears shall hear for evermore.
For evermore thou hear'st a mortal Pan
And those melodious godheads, ever young
And ever quiring on the mountains old.

What was this earth, child of the gods, to thee?
Forth from thy dreamland thou, a dreamer cam'st
And in thine ears the olden music rang,
And in thy mind the doings of the dead,
And those heroic ages long forgot.
To a so fallen earth, alas! too late,

Alas! in evil days, thy steps return,
To list at noon for nightingales, to grow
A dweller on the beach till Argo come
That came long since, a lingerer by the pool
Where that desired angel bathes no more.

As when the Indian to Dakota comes
Or farthest Idaho, and where he dwelt,
He with his clan, a humming city finds;
Thereon a while, amazed, he stares, and then
To right and leftward, like a questing dog,
Seeks first the ancestral altars, then the hearth
Long cold with rains, and where old terror lodged,
And where the dead. So thee undying Hope,
With all her pack, hunts screaming through the years:
Here, there, thou fleest; but nor here nor there
The pleasant gods abide, the glory dwells.

That, that was not Apollo, not the god.
This was not Venus, though she Venus seemed
A moment. And though fair yon river move,
She, all the way from disenchanted fount
To seas unhallowed runs; the gods forsook
Long since her trembling rushes; from her plains
Disconsolate, long since adventure fled;
And now although the inviting river flows
And every poplared cape and every bend
Or willowy islet, win upon thy soul
And to thy hopeful shallop whisper speed;
Yet hope not thou at all; hope is no more;
And O, long since the golden groves are dead
The faery cities vanished from the land!

XVI

TO W. E. HENLEY

The year runs through her phases; rain and sun,
Springtime and summer pass; winter succeeds;
But one pale season rules the house of death.

Cold falls the imprisoned daylight; fell disease
By each lean pallet squats, and pain and sleep
Toss gaping on the pillows.

But O thou!
Uprise and take thy pipe. Bid music flow,
Strains by good thoughts attended, like the spring
The swallows follow over land and sea.
Pain sleeps at once; at once, with open eyes,
Dozing despair awakes. The shepherd sees
His flock come bleating home; the seaman hears
Once more the cordage rattle. Airs of home!
Youth, love and roses blossom; the gaunt ward
Dislimns and disappears, and, opening out,
Shows brooks and forests, and the blue beyond
Of mountains.

Small the pipe; but oh! do thou,
Peak-faced and suffering piper, blow therein
The dirge of heroes dead; and to these sick,
These dying, sound the triumph over death.
Behold! each greatly breathes; each tastes a joy
Unknown before, in dying; for each knows
A hero dies with him—though unfulfilled,
Yet conquering truly—and not dies in vain.

So is pain cheered, death comforted; the house
Of sorrow smiles to listen. Once again—
O thou, Orpheus and Heracles, the bard
And the deliverer, touch the stops again!

XVII

HENRY JAMES

Who comes to-night? We ope the doors in vain.
Who comes? My bursting walls, can you contain
The presences that now together throng
Your narrow entry, as with flowers and song,
As with the air of life, the breath of talk?
Lo, how these fair immaculate women walk
Behind their jocund maker; and we see

Slighted *De Mauves,* and that far different she,
Gressie, the trivial sphynx; and to our feast
Daisy and *Barb* and *Chancellor* (she not least!)
With all their silken, all their airy kin,
Do like unbidden angels enter in.
But he, attended by these shining names,
Comes (best of all) himself—our welcome James.

XVIII

THE MIRROR SPEAKS

WHERE the bells peal far at sea
Cunning fingers fashioned me.
There on palace walls I hung
While that Consuelo sung;
But I heard, though I listened well,
Never a note, never a trill,
Never a beat of the chiming bell.
There I hung and looked, and there
In my gray face, faces fair
Shone from under shining hair.
Well I saw the poising head,
But the lips moved and nothing said;
And when lights were in the hall,
Silent moved the dancers all.

So a while I glowed, and then
Fell on dusty days and men;
Long I slumbered packed in straw,
Long I none but dealers saw;
Till before my silent eye
One that sees came passing by.

Now with an outlandish grace,
To the sparkling fire I face
In the blue room at Skerryvore;
Where I wait until the door
Open, and the Prince of Men,
Henry James, shall come again.

XIX

KATHARINE

We see you as we see a face
That trembles in a forest place
Upon the mirror of a pool
Forever quiet, clear and cool;
And in the wayward glass appears
To hover between smiles and tears
Elfin and human, airy and true,
And backed by the reflected blue.

XX

TO F. J. S.

I read, dear friend, in your dear face
Your life's tale told with perfect grace;
The river of your life I trace
Up the sun-checkered, devious bed
To the far-distant fountain-head.
Not one quick beat of your warm heart,
Nor thought that came to you apart,
Pleasure nor pity, love nor pain
Nor sorrow, has gone by in vain;
But as some lone, wood-wandering child
Brings home with him at evening mild
The thorns and flowers of all the wild,
From your whole life, O fair and true,
Your flowers and thorns you bring with you!

XXI

REQUIEM

Under the wide and starry sky,
Dig the grave and let me lie.
Glad did I live and gladly die,
And I laid me down with a will.

This be the verse you grave for me:
Here he lies where he longed to be;
Home is the sailor, home from sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.

XXII

THE CELESTIAL SURGEON

If I have faltered more or less
In my great task of happiness;
If I have moved among my race
And shown no glorious morning face;
If beams from happy human eyes
Have moved me not; if morning skies,
Books, and my food, and summer rain
Knocked on my sullen heart in vain:—
Lord, thy most pointed pleasure take
And stab my spirit broad awake;
Or, Lord, if too obdurate I,
Choose thou, before that spirit die,
A piercing pain, a killing sin,
And to my dead heart run them in!

XXIII

OUR LADY OF THE SNOWS

Out of the sun, out of the blast,
Out of the world, alone I passed
Across the moor and through the wood
To where the monastery stood.
There neither lute nor breathing fife,
Nor rumor of the world of life,
Nor confidences low and dear,
Shall strike the meditative ear.
Aloof, unhelpful, and unkind,

The prisoners of the iron mind,
Where nothing speaks except the hell
The unfraternal brothers dwell.

Poor, passionate men, still clothed afresh
With agonizing folds of flesh;
Whom the clear eyes solicit still
To some bold output of the will,
While fairy Fancy far before
And musing Memory-Hold-the-door
Now to heroic death invite
And now uncurtain fresh delight:
O, little boots it thus to dwell
On the remote unneighbored hill!

O, to be up and doing, O
Unfearing and unshamed to go
In all the uproar and the press
About my human business!
My undissuaded heart I hear
Whisper courage in my ear.
With voiceless calls, the ancient earth
Summons me to a daily birth.
Thou, O my love, ye, O my friends—
The gist of life, the end of ends—
To laugh, to love, to live, to die,
Ye call me by the ear and eye!

Forth from the casemate, on the plain
Where honor has the world to gain,
Pour forth and bravely do your part,
O knights of the unshielded heart!
Forth and forever forward!—out
From prudent turret and redoubt,
And in the mellay charge amain,
To fall, but yet to rise again!
Captive? ah, still, to honor bright,
A captive soldier of the right!
Or free and fighting, good with ill?
Unconquering but unconquered still!

And ye, O brethren, what if God,
When from heav'n's top he spies abroad,
And sees on this tormented stage
The noble war of mankind rage:
What if his vivifying eye,
O monks, should pass your corner by?
For still the Lord is Lord of might;
In deeds, in deeds, he takes delight;
The plow, the spear, the laden barks,
The field, the founded city, marks;
He marks the smiler of the streets,
The singer upon garden seats;
He sees the climber in the rocks:
To him the shepherd folds his flocks.
For those he loves that underprop
With daily virtues heaven's top,
And bear the falling sky with ease,
Unfrowning caryatides.

Those he approves that ply the trade,
That rock the child, that wed the maid,
That with weak virtues, weaker hands,
Sow gladness on the peopled lands,
And still with laughter, song and shout,
Spin the great wheel of earth about.

But ye?—O ye who linger still,
Here in your fortress on the hill,
With placid face, with tranquil breath,
The unsought volunteers of death,
Our cheerful General on high
With careless looks may pass you by.

XXIV

Not yet, my soul, these friendly fields desert,
Where thou with grass, and rivers, and the breeze,
And the bright face of day, thy dalliance hadst;
Where to thine ear first sang the enraptured birds;

Where love and thou lasting bargain made.
The ship rides trimmed, and from the eternal shore
Thou hearest airy voices; but not yet
Depart, my soul, not yet a while depart.

Freedom is far, rest far. Thou art with life
Too closely woven, nerve with nerve entwined;
Service still craving service, love for love,
Love for dear love, still suppliant with tears.
Alas, not yet thy human task is done!
A bond at birth is forged; a debt doth lie
Immortal on mortality. It grows—
By vast rebound it grows, unceasing growth;
Gift upon gift, alms upon alms, upreared,
From man, from God, from nature, till the soul
At that so huge indulgence stands amazed.

Leave not, my soul, the unfoughten field, nor leave
Thy debts dishonored, nor thy place desert
Without due service rendered. For thy life,
Up, spirit, and defend that fort of clay,
Thy body, now beleaguered; whether soon
Or late she fall; whether to-day thy friends
Bewail thee dead, or, after years, a man
Grown old in honor and the friend of peace.
Contend, my soul, for moments and for hours;
Each is with service pregnant; each reclaimed
Is as a kingdom conquered, where to reign.
As when a captain rallies to the fight
His scattered legions, and beats ruin back,
He, on the field, encamps, well pleased in mind.
Yet surely him shall fortune overtake,
Him smite in turn, headlong his ensigns drive;
And that dear land, now safe, to-morrow fall.
But he, unthinking, in the present good
Solely delights, and all the camps rejoice.

XXV

It is not yours, O mother, to complain,
Not, mother, yours to weep,
Though nevermore your son again
Shall to your bosom creep,
Though nevermore again you watch
your baby sleep.

Though in the greener paths of earth,
Mother and child no more
We wander; and no more the birth
Of me whom once you bore
Seems still the brave reward that
once it seemed of yore;

Though as all passes, day and night,
The seasons and the years,
From you, O mother, this delight,
This also disappears—
Some profit yet survives of all your
pangs and tears.

The child, the seed, the grain of corn,
The acorn on the hill,
Each for some separate end is born
In season fit, and still
Each must in strength arise to work
the almighty will.

So from the hearth the children flee,
By that almighty hand
Austerely led; so one by sea
Goes forth, and one by land;
Nor aught of all man's sons escape from
that command.

So from the sally each obeys
The unseen almighty nod;
So till the ending all their ways

Blindfolded loth have trod:
Nor knew their task at all, but were the
tools of God.

And as the fervent smith of yore
Beat out the glowing blade,
Nor wielded in the front of war
The weapons that he made,
But in the tower at home still plied his
ringing trade;

So like a sword the son shall roam
On nobler missions sent;
And as the smith remained at home
In peaceful turret pent,
So sits the while at home the mother
well content.

XXVI

THE SICK CHILD

Child

O MOTHER, lay your hand on my brow!
O mother, mother, where am I now?
Why is the room so gaunt and great?
Why am I lying awake so late?

Mother

Fear not at all: the night is still;
Nothing is here that means you ill—
Nothing but lamps the whole town through,
And never a child awake but you.

Child

Mother, mother, speak low in my ear,
Some of the things are so great and near,
Some are so small and far away,

I have a fear that I cannot say.
What have I done, and what do I fear,
And why are you crying, mother dear?

Mother
Out in the city, sounds begin,
Thank the kind God, the carts come in!
An hour or two more, and God is so kind,
The day shall be blue in the window-blind,
Then shall my child go sweetly asleep,
And dream of the birds and the hills of sheep.

XXVII

IN MEMORIAM F. A. S.

YET, O stricken heart, remember, O remember
How of human days he lived the better part.
April came to bloom and never dim December
Breathed its killing chills upon the head or heart.

Doomed to know not Winter, only Spring, a being
Trod the flowery April blithely for a while,
Took his fill of music, joy of thought and seeing,
Came and stayed and went, nor ever ceased to smile.

Came and stayed and went, and now when all is finished,
You alone have crossed the melancholy stream,
Yours the pang, but his, O his, the undiminished
Undecaying gladness, undeparted dream.

All that life contains of torture, toil, and treason,
Shame, dishonor, death, to him were but a name.
Here, a boy, he dwelt through all the singing season
And ere the day of sorrow departed as he came.

DAVOS, 1881.

XXVIII

TO MY FATHER

PEACE and her huge invasion to these shores
Puts daily home; innumerable sails
Dawn on the far horizon and draw near;
Innumerable loves, uncounted hopes
To our wild coasts, not darkling now, approach:
Not now obscure, since thou and thine are there,
And bright on the lone isle, the foundered reef,
The long, resounding foreland, Pharos stands.

These are thy works, O father, these thy crown;
Whether on high the air be pure, they shine
Along the yellowing sunset, and all night
Among the unnumbered stars of God they shine;
Or whether fogs arise and far and wide
The low sea-level drown—each finds a tongue
And all night long the tolling bell resounds:
So shine, so toll, till night be overpast,
Till the stars vanish, till the sun return,
And in the haven rides the fleet secure.

In the first hour, the seaman in his skiff
Moves through the unmoving bay, to where the town
Its earliest smoke into the air upbreathes
And the rough hazels climb along the beach.
To the tugg'd oar the distant echo speaks.
The ship lies resting, where by reef and roost
Thou and thy lights have led her like a child.

This hast thou done, and I—can I be base?
I must arise, O father, and to port
Some lost, complaining seaman pilot home.

XXIX

IN THE STATES

With half a heart I wander here
  As from an age gone by
A brother—yet though young in years,
  An elder brother, I.

You speak another tongue than mine,
  Though both were English born.
I toward the night of time decline,
  You mount into the morn.

Youth shall grow great and strong and free,
  But age must still decay:
To-morrow for the States—for me,
  England and Yesterday.

San Francisco.

XXX

A PORTRAIT

I am a kind of farthing dip,
  Unfriendly to the nose and eyes;
A blue-behinded ape, I skip
  Upon the trees of Paradise.

At mankind's feast, I take my place
  In solemn, sanctimonious state,
And have the air of saying grace
  While I defile the dinner-plate.

I am "the smiler with the knife,"
  The battener upon garbage, I—
Dear Heaven, with such a rancid life,
  Were it not better far to die?

Yet still, about the human pale,
  I love to scamper, love to race,

To swing by my irreverent tail
  All over the most holy place;

And when at length, some golden day,
  The unfailing sportsman, aiming at,
Shall bag, me—all the world shall say,
  Thank God, and there's an end of that!

XXXI

Sing clearlier, Muse, or evermore be still,
Sing truer or no longer sing!
No more the voice of melancholy Jacques
To wake a weeping echo in the hill;
But as the boy, the pirate of the spring,
From the green elm a living linnet takes,
One natural verse recapture—then be still.

XXXII

A CAMP[1]

The bed was made, the room was fit;
By punctual eve the stars were lit;
The air was still, the water ran,
No need was there for maid or man,
When we put up, my ass and I,
At God's green caravanserai.

XXXIII

THE COUNTRY OF THE CAMISARDS[2]

We traveled in the print of olden wars,
  Yet all the land was green
  And love we found, and peace,
  Where fire and war had been.

[1] From "Travels with a Donkey." [2] *Ibid.*

They pass and smile, the children of the sword—
No more the sword they wield;
And O, how deep the corn
Along the battlefield!

XXXIV

SKERRYVORE

For love of lovely words and for the sake
Of those, my kinsmen and my countrymen,
Who early and late in the windy ocean toiled
To plant a star for seamen, where was then
The surfy haunt of seals and cormorants:
I, on the lintel of this cot, inscribe
The name of a strong tower.

XXXV

SKERRYVORE: *The Parallel*

Here all is sunny, and when the truant gull
Skims the green level of the lawn, his wing
Dispetals roses; here the house is framed
Of kneaded brick and the plumed mountain pine,
Such clay as artists fashion and such wood
As the tree-climbing urchin breaks. But there
Eternal granite hewn from the living isle
And dowelled with brute iron, rears a tower
That from its wet foundation to its crown
Of glittering glass, stands, in the sweep of winds
Immovable, immortal, eminent.

XXXVI

My house, I say. But hark to the sunny doves
That make my roof the arena of their loves,
That gyre about the gable all day long

And fill the chimneys with their murmurous song:
Our house, they say; and *mine,* the cat declares
And spreads his golden fleece upon the chairs;
And *mine,* the dog, and rises stiff with wrath
If any alien foot profane the path.
So too the buck that trimmed my terraces,
Our whilome gardener, called the garden his;
Who now, deposed, surveys my plain abode
And his late kingdom, only from the road.

XXXVII

My body which my dungeon is,
And yet my parks and palaces:—
  Which is so great that there I go
All the day long to and fro,
And when the night begins to fall
Throw down my bed and sleep, while all
The building hums with wakefulness—
Even as a child of savages
When evening takes her on her way,
(She having roamed a summer's day
Along the mountain-sides and scalp)
Sleeps in an antre of that alp:—
  Which is so broad and high that there,
As in the topless fields of air,
My fancy soars like to a kite
And faints in the blue infinite:—
  Which is so strong, my strongest throes
And the rough world's besieging blows
Not break it, and so weak withal,
Death ebbs and flows in its loose wall
As the green sea in fishers' nets,
And tops its topmost parapets:—
  Which is so wholly mine that I
Can wield its whole artillery,
And mine so little, that my soul
Dwells in perpetual control,
And I but think and speak and do

As my dead fathers move me to:—
If this born body of my bones
The beggared soul so barely owns,
What money passed from hand to hand,
What creeping custom of the land,
What deed of author or assign,
Can make a house a thing of mine?

XXXVIII

Say not of me that weakly I declined
The labors of my sires, and fled the sea,
The towers we founded and the lamps we lit,
To play at home with paper like a child.
But rather say: *In the afternoon of time*
A strenuous family dusted from its hands
The sand of granite, and beholding far
Along the sounding coast its pyramids
And tall memorials catch the dying sun,
Smiled well content, and to this childish task
Around the fire addressed its evening hours.

BOOK II—IN SCOTS

TABLE OF COMMON SCOTTISH VOWEL SOUNDS

ae, ai } = open A as in rare.

a', au, aw } = AW as in law.

ea = open E as in mere, but this with exceptions, as heather = heather, wean = wain, lear = liar.

ee, ei, ie } = open E as in mere.

oa = open O as in more.

ou = doubled O as in poor.

ow = OW as in Bower.

u = doubled O as in poor.

ui or ü before R = (say roughly) open A as in rare.

ui or ü before any other consonant = (say roughly) close I as in grin.

y = open I as in kite.

i = pretty nearly what you please, much as in English. Heaven guide the reader through that labyrinth! But in Scots it dodges usually from the short I, as in grin, to the open E, as in mere. Find and blind, I may remark, are pronounced to rhyme with the preterite of grin.

I

THE MAKER TO POSTERITY

FAR 'yont amang the years to be
When a' we think, an' a' we see,
An' a' we luve, 's been dung ajee
By time's rouch shouther,
An' what was richt and wrang for me
Lies mangled throu'ther,

It's possible—it's hardly mair—
That some ane, ripin' after lear—

Some auld professor or young heir,
If still there's either—
May find an' read me, an' be sair
Perplexed, puir brither!

"What tongue does your auld bookie speak?"
He'll spier; an' I, his mou to steik:
"No bein' fit to write in Greek,
I wrote in Lallan,
Dear to my heart as the peat reek,
Auld as Tantallon.

"Few spak it than, an' noo there's nane.
My puir auld sangs lie a' their lane,
Their sense, that aince was braw an' plain,
Tint a'thegether,
Like runes upon a standin' stane
Amang the heather.

"But think not you the brae to speel;
You, tae, maun chow the bitter peel;
For a' your lear, for a' your skeel,
Ye're nane sae lucky;
An' things are mebbe waur than weel
For you, my buckie.

"The hale concern (baith hens and eggs,
Baith books an' writers, stars an' clegs)
Noo stachers upon lowsent legs
An' wears awa';
The tack o' mankind, near the dregs,
Rins unco law.

"Your book, that in some braw new tongue,
We wrote or prentit, preached or sung,
Will still be just a bairn, an' young
In fame an' years,
Whan the hale planet's guts are dung
About your ears;

"An' you, sair gruppin, to a spar
Or whammled wi' some bleezin' star,
Cryin' to ken whaur deil ye are,
Hame, France, or Flanders—
Whang sindry like a railway car
An' flie in danders."

II

ILLE TERRARUM

Frae nirly, nippin', Eas'lan' breeze,
Frae Norlan' snaw, an' haar o' seas,
Weel happit in your garden trees,
A bonny bit,
Atween the muckle Pentland's knees,
Secure ye sit.

Beeches an' aiks entwine their theek,
An' firs, a stench, auld-farrant clique.
A' simmer day, your chimleys reek,
Couthy and bien;
An' here an' there your windies keek
Amang the green.

A pickle plats an' paths an' posies,
A wheen auld gillyflowers an' roses:
A ring o' wa's the hale incloses
Frae sheep or men;
An' there the auld housie beeks and dozes
A' by her lane.

The gairdner crooks his weary back
A' day in the pitaty-track,
Or mebbe stops a while to crack
Wi' Jane the cook,
Or at some buss, worm-eaten-black,
To gie a look.

Frae the high hills the curlew ca's;
The sheep gang baaing by the wa's;
Or whiles a clan o' roosty craws
Cangle together;
The wild bees seek the gairden raws,
Weariet wi' heather.

Or in the gloamin' douce an' gray
The sweet-throat mavis tunes her lay;
The herd comes linkin' doun the brae;
An' by degrees
The muckle siller müne maks way
Amang the trees.

Here aft hae I, wi' sober heart,
For meditation sat apairt,
When orra loves or kittle art
Perplexed my mind;
Here socht a balm for ilka smart
O' humankind.

Here aft, weel neukit by my lane,
Wi' Horace, or perhaps Montaigne,
The mornin' hours hae come an' gane
Abüne my heid—
I wadnae gi'en a chucky-stane
For a' I'd read.

But noo the auld city, street by street,
An' winter fu' o' snaw an' sleet,
A while shut in my gangrel feet
An' goavin' mettle;
Noo is the soopit ingle sweet,
An' liltin' kettle.

An' noo the winter winds complain;
Cauld lies the glaur in ilka lane;
On draigled hizzie, tautit wean
An' drucken lads,
In the mirk nicht, the winter rain
Dribbles an' blads.

Whan bugles frae the Castle rock,
An' beaten drums wi' dowie shock,
Wauken, at cauld-rife sax o'clock,
My chitterin' frame,
I mind me on the kintry cock,
The kintry hame.

I mind me on yon bonny bield;
An' Fancy traivels far afield
To gaither a' that gairdens yield
O' sun an' Simmer:
To hearten up a dowie chield,
Fancy's the limmer'

III

When aince Aprile has fairly come,
An' birds may bigg in winter's lum,
An' pleisure's spreid for a' and some
O' whatna state,
Love, wi' her auld recruitin' drum,
Than taks the gate.

The heart plays dunt wi' main an' micht;
The lasses' een are a' sae bricht,
Their dresses are sae braw an' ticht,
The bonny birdies!—
Puir winter virtue at the sicht
Gangs heels ower hurdies.

An' aye as love frae land to land
Tirls the drum wi' eident hand,
A' men collect at her command,
Toun-bred or land'art,
An' follow in a denty band
Her gaucy standart.

An' I, wha sang o' rain an' snaw,
An' weary winter weel awa',

Noo busk me in a jacket braw,
An' tak my place
I' the ram-stam, harum-scarum raw,
Wi' smilin' face.

IV

A MILE AN' A BITTOCK

A MILE an' a bittock, a mile or twa,
Abüne the burn, ayont the law,
Davie an' Donal' an' Cherlie an' a',
An' the müne was shinin' clearly!

Ane went hame wi' the ither, an' then
The ither went hame wi' the ither twa men,
An' baith wad return him the service again,
An' the müne was shinin' clearly!

The clocks were chappin' in house an' ha',
Eleeven, twal an' ane an' twa;
An' the guidman's face was turnt to the wa',
An' the müne was shinin' clearly!

A wind got up frae affa the sea,
It blew the stars as clear's could be,
It blew in the een of a' o' the three,
An' the müne was shinin' clearly!

Noo, Davie was first to get sleep in his head,
"The best o' frien's maun twine," he said;
"I'm weariet, an' here I'm awa' to my bed."
An' the müne was shinin' clearly!

Twa o' them walkin' an' crackin' in their lane,
The mornin' licht cam gray an' plain,
An' the birds they yammert on stick an' stane,
An' the müne was shinin' clearly!

O years ayont, O years awa',
My lads, ye'll mind whate'er befa'—
My lads, ye'll mind on the bield o' the law,
When the müne was shinin' clearly.

V

A LOWDEN SABBATH MORN

THE clinkum-clark o' Sabbath bells
Noo to the hoastin' rookery swells,
Noo faintin' laigh in shady dells,
Sounds far an' near,
An' through the simmer kintry tells
Its tale o' cheer.

An' noo, to that melodious play,
A' deidly awn the quiet sway—
A' ken their solemn holiday,
Bestial an' human,
The singin' lintie on the brae,
The restin' plou'man.

He, mair than a' the lave o' men,
His week completit joys to ken;
Half-dressed, he daunders out an' in,
Perplext wi' leisure;
An' his raxt limbs he'll rax again
Wi' painfü' pleesure.

The steerin' mither strang afit
Noo shoos the bairnies but a bit;

NOTE.—It may be guessed by some that I had a certain parish in my eye, and this makes it proper I should add a word of disclamation. In my time there have been two ministers in that parish. Of the first I have a special reason to speak well, even had there been any to think ill. The second I have often met in private and long (in the due phrase) "sat under" in his church, and neither here nor there have I heard an unkind or ugly word upon his lips. The preacher of the text had thus no original in that particular parish; but when I was a boy, he might have been observed in many others; he was then (like the schoolmaster) abroad; and by recent advices, it would seem he has not yet entirely disappeared.

Noo cries them ben, their Sinday shüit
To scart upon them,
Or sweeties in their pouch to pit,
Wi' blessin's on them.

The lasses, clean frae tap to taes,
Are busked in crunklin' underclaes;
The gartened hose, the weel-filled stays,
The nakit shift,
A' bleached on bonny greens for days,
An' white's the drift.

An' noo to face the kirkward mile:
The guidman's hat o' dacent style,
The blackit shoon, we noo maun fyle
As white's the miller;
A waefü' peety tae, to spile
The warth o' siller.

Our Marg'et, aye sae keen to crack,
Douce-stappin' in the stoury track,
Her emeralt goun a' kiltit back
Frae snawy coats,
White-ankled, leads the kirkward pack
Wi' Dauvit Groats.

A thocht ahint, in runkled breeks
A' spiled wi' lyin' by for weeks,
The guidman follows closs, an' cleiks
The sonsie missis;
His sarious face at aince bespeaks
The day that this is.

And aye an' while we nearer draw
To whaur the kirton lies alaw,
Mair neebors, comin' saft an' slaw
Frae here an' there,
The thicker thrang the gate an' caw
The stour in air.

But hark! the bells frae nearer clang:

—*Lowdon Sabbath Morn*, p. 51

But hark! the bells frae nearer clang;
To rowst the slaw, their sides they bang;
An' see! black coats a'ready thrang
The green kirkyaird,
And at the yett, the chestnuts spang
That brocht the laird.

The solemn elders at the plate
Stand drinkin' deep the pride o' state:
That practiced hands as gash an' great
As Lords o' Session;
The later named, a wee thing blate
In their expression.

The prentit stanes that mark the deid,
Wi' lengthened lip, the sarious read;
Syne wag a moraleesin' heid,
An' then an' there
Their hirplin' practice an' their creed
Try hard to square.

It's here our Merren lang has lain,
A wee bewast the table-stane;
An' yon's the grave o' Sandy Blane;
An' further ower,
The mither's brithers, dacent men!
Lie a' the fower.

Here the guidman sall bide awee
To dwall amang the deid; to see
Auld faces clear in fancy's e'e;
Belike to hear
Auld voices fa'in' saft an' slee
On fancy's ear.

Thus, on the day o' solemn things,
The bell that in the steeple swings
To fauld a scaittered faim'ly rings
Its walcome screed;
An' just a wee thing nearer brings
The quick an' deid.

But noo the bell is ringin' in;
To tak their places, folk begin;
The minister himsel' will shüne
Be up the gate,
Filled fu' wi' clavers about sin
An' man's estate.

The tünes are up—*French,* to be shüre,
The faithfü' *French,* an' twa-three mair.
The auld prezentor, hoastin' sair,
Wales out the portions,
An' yirks the tüne into the air
Wi' queer contortions.

Follows the prayer, the readin' next,
An' than the fisslin' for the text—
The twa-three last to find it, vext
But kind o' proud;
An' than the peppermints are raxed,
An' southernwood.

For noo's the time whan pows are seen
Nid-noddin' like a mandareen;
When tenty mithers stap a preen
In sleepin' weans;
An' nearly half the parochine
Forget their pains.

There's just a waukrif' twa or three:
Thrawn commentautors sweer to 'gree,
Weans glowrin' at the bumblin' bee
On the windie-glasses,
Or lads that tak a keek a-glee
At sonsie lasses.

Himsel', meanwhile, frae whaur he cocks
An' bobs belaw the soundin'-box,
The treesures of his words unlocks
Wi' prodigality,
An' deals some unco dingin' knocks
To infidality.

"An you's the grave o' Sandy Blane;"

—*Lowdon Sabbath Morn*, p. 51

Wi' sappy unction, hoo he burkes
The hopes o' men that trust in works,
Expounds the fau'ts o' ither kirks,
An' shaws the best o' them
No muckle better than mere Turks,
When a's confessed o' them.

Bethankit! what a bonny creed!
What mair would ony Christian need?—
The braw words rumm'le ower his heid,
Nor steer the sleeper;
An' in their restin' graves, the deid
Sleep aye the deeper.

VI

THE SPAEWIFE

O, I wad like to ken—to the beggar-wife says I—
Why chops are guid to brander and nane sae good to fry.
An' siller, that's sae braw to keep, is brawer still to gi'e.
—*It's gey an easy spierin'*, says the beggar-wife to me.

O, I wad like to ken—to beggar-wife says I—
Hoo a' things come to be whaur we find them when we try,
The lasses in their claes an' the fishes in the sea.
—*It's gey an easy spierin'*, says the beggar-wife to me.

O, I wad like to ken—to the beggar-wife says I—
Why lads are a' to sell an' lasses a' to buy;
An' naebody for dacency but barely twa or three.
—*It's gey an easy spierin'*, says the beggar-wife to me.

O, I wad like to ken—to the beggar-wife says I—
Gin death's as shüre to men as killin' is to kye,
Why God has filled the yearth sae fu' o' tasty things to pree.
—*It's gey an easy spierin'*, says the beggar-wife to me.

O, I wad like to ken—to the beggar-wife says I—
The reason o' the cause an' the wherefore o' the why,
Wi' mony anither riddle brings the tear into my e'e.
—*It's gey an easy spierin'*, says the beggar-wife to me.

VII

THE BLAST—1875

It's rainin'. Weet's the gairden sod,
Weet the lang roads whaur gangrels plod—
A maist unceevil thing o' God
In mid July—
If ye'll just curse the sneckdraw, dod!
An' sae wull I!

He's a braw place in heev'n, ye ken,
An' lea's us puir, forjaskit men
Clamjamfried in the but and ben
He ca's the earth—
A wee bit inconvenient den
No muckle worth;

An' whiles, at orra times, keeks out,
Sees what puir mankind are about;
An' if He can, I've little doubt,
Upsets their plans;
He hates a' mankind, brainch and root,
An' a' that's man's.

An' whiles, whan they tak heart again,
An' life i' the sun looks braw an' plain,
Doun comes a jaw o' droukin' rain
Upon their honors—
God sends a spate outower the plain,
Or mebbe thun'ers.

Lord safe us, life's an unco thing!
Simmer an' Winter, Yule an' Spring,

The damned, dour-heartit seasons bring
A feck o' trouble.
I wadna try't to be a king—
No, nor for double.

But since we're in it, willy-nilly,
We maun be watchfü, wise an' skilly
An' no mind ony ither billy,
Lassie nor God.
But drink—that's my best counsel till 'e:
Sae tak the nod.

VIII

THE COUNTERBLAST—1886

My bonny man, the warld, it's true,
Was made for neither me nor you;
It's just a place to warstle through,
As Job confessed o't;
And aye the best that we'll can do
Is mak the best o't.

There's rowth o' wrang, I'm free to say:
The simmer brunt, the winter blae,
The face of earth a' fyled wi' clay
An' dour wi' chuckies,
An' life a rough an' land'art play
For country buckies.

An' food's anither name for clart;
An' beasts an' brambles bite an' scart;
An' what would we be like, my heart!
If bared o' claethin'?
—Aweel, I cannae mend your cart:
It's that or naethin'.

A feck o' folk frae first to last
Have through this queer experience passed;

Twa-three, I ken, just damn an' blast
The hale transaction;
But twa-three ithers, east an' wast,
Fand satisfaction.

Whaur braid the briery muirs expand,
A waefü' an' a weary land,
The bumblebees, a gowden band,
Are blithely hingin';
An' there the canty wanderer fand
The laverock singin'.

Trout in the burn grow great as herr'n',
The simple sheep can find their fair'n';
The wind blaws clean about the cairn
Wi' caller air;
The muircock an' the barefit bairn
Are happy there.

Sic-like the howes o' life to some:
Green loans whaur they ne'er fash their thumb,
But mark the muckle winds that come,
Soopin' an' cool,
Or hear the powrin' burnie drum
In the shilfa's pool.

The evil wi' the guid they tak;
They ca' a gray thing gray, no black;
To a steigh brae, a stubborn back
Addressin' daily;
An' up the rude, unbieldy track
O' life, gang gayly.

What you would like's a palace ha',
Or Sinday parlor dink an' braw
Wi' a' things ordered in a raw
By denty leddies.
Weel, than, ye cannae hae't; that's a'
That to be said is.

An' since at life ye've taen the grue,
An' winnae blithely hirsle through,
Ye've fund the very thing to do—
That's to drink speerit;
An' shüne we'll hear the last o' you—
An' blithe to hear it!

The shoon ye coft, the life ye lead,
Ithers will heir when aince ye're deid;
They'll heir your tasteless bite o' breid,
An' find it sappy;
They'll to your dulefü' house succeed,
An' there by happy.

As whan a glum an' fractious wean
Has sat an' sullened by his lane
Till, wi' a rowstin' skelp, he's taen
An' shoo'd to bed—
The ither bairns a' fa' to play'n',
As gleg's a gled.

IX

THE COUNTERBLAST IRONICAL

It's strange that God should fash to frame
The yearth and lift sae hie,
An' clean forget to explain the same
To a gentleman like me.

They gusty, donnered ither folk,
Their weird they weel may dree;
But why present a pig in a poke
To a gentleman like me?

They ither folk their parritch eat
An' sup their sugared tea;
But the mind is no to be wyled wi' meat
Wi' a gentleman like me.

They ither folk, they court their joes
At gloamin' on the lea;
But they're made of a commoner clay, I suppose,
Than a gentleman like me.

They ither folk, for richt or wrang,
They suffer, bleed, or dee;
But a' thir things are an emp'y sang
To a gentleman like me.

It's a different thing that I demand,
Tho' humble as can be—
A statement fair in my Maker's hand
To a gentleman like me:

A clear account writ fair an' broad,
An' a plain apologie;
Or the deevil a ceevil word to God
From a gentleman like me.

X

THEIR LAUREATE TO AN ACADEMY CLASS DINNER CLUB

Dear Thamson class, whaure'er I gang
It aye comes ower me wi' a spang:
"Lordsake! they Thamson lads—(deil hang
Or else Lord mend them!)—
An' that wanchancy annual sang
I ne'er can send them!"

Straucht, at the name a trusty tyke,
My conscience girrs ahint the dyke;
Straucht on my hinderlands I fyke
To find a rhyme t' ye;
Pleased—although mebbe no pleased-like—
To gie my time t' ye.

"Weel," an' says you, wi' heavin' breist,
"Sae far, sae guid, but what's the neist?
Yearly we gaither to the feast,
A hopefü' men—
Yearly we skelloch 'Hang the beast—
Nae sang again!'"

My lads, an' what am I to say?
Ye shürely ken the Muse's way:
Yestreen, as gleg's a tyke—the day,
Thrawn like a cuddy:
Her conduc', that to her's a play,
Deith to a body.

Aft whan I sat an' made my mane,
Aft when I labored burd-alane
Fishin' for rhymes an' findin' nane,
Or nane were fit for ye—
Ye judged me cauld's a chucky stane—
No car'n' a bit for ye!

But saw ye ne'er some pingein' bairn
As weak as a pitaty-par'n'—
Less üsed wi' guidin' horse-shoe airn
Than steerin' crowdie—
Packed aff his lane, by moss an' cairn,
To ca' the howdie.

Wae's me, for the puir callant than!
He wambles like a poke o' bran,
An' the lowse rein, as hard's he can,
Pu's, trem'lin', handit;
Till, blaff! upon his hinderlan'
Behauld him landit.

Sic-like—I awn the weary fac'—
Whan on my muse the gate I tak,
An' see her gleed e'e raxin' back
To keek ahint her:—
To me the brig of heev'n gangs black
As blackest winter.

"Lordsake! we're aff," thinks I, *"but whaur?*
On what abhorred and whinny scaur,
Or whammled in what sea o' glaur,
Will she desert me?
An' will she just disgrace? or waur—
Will she no hurt me?"

Kittle the quaere! But at least
The day I've backed the fashious beast,
While she, wi' mony a spang an' reist,
Flang heels ower bonnet;
An' a' triumphant—for your feast,
Hae! there's your sonnet!

XI

EMBRO HIE KIRK

The Lord Himsel' in former days
Waled out the proper tünes for praise
An' named the proper kind o' claes
For folk to preach in:
Preceese and in the chief o' ways
Important teachin'.

He ordered a' things, late and air';
He ordered folk to stand at prayer
(Although I cannae just mind where
He gave the warnin')
An' pit pomatum on their hair
On Sabbath mornin'.

The hale o' life by His commands
Was ordered to a body's hands;
But see! this *corpus juris* stands
By a' forgotten;
An' God's religion in a' lands
Is deid an' rotten.

While thus the lave o' mankind's lost
O' Scotland still God makes His boast—
Puir Scotland, on whase barren coast
A score or twa
Auld wives wi' mutches an' a hoast
Still keep His law.

In Scotland, a wheen canty, plain,
Douce kintry-leevin' folk retain
The Truth—or did so ainee—alane
Of a' men leevin';
An' noo just twa o' them remain—
Just Begg an' Niven.

For noo, unfaithfü' to the Lord,
Auld Scotland joins the rebel horde;
Her human hymn-books on the board
She noo displays:
An' Embro Hie Kirk's been restored
In popish ways.

O punctum temporis for action
To a' o' the reformin' faction,
If yet, by ony act or paction,
Thocht, word, or sermon,
This dark an' damnable transaction
Micht yet determine!

For see—as Doctor Begg explains—
Hoo easy 't's düne! a pickle weans,
Wha in the Hie Street gaither stanes
By his instruction,
The uncovenantit, pentit panes
Ding to destruction.

Up, Niven, or ower late—an' dash
Laigh in the glaur that carnal hash:
Let spires and pews wi' gran' stramash
Thegether fa';
The rumlin' kist o' whustles smash
In pieces sma'.

Noo choose ye out a walie hammer;
About the knottit buttress clam'er;
Alang the steep roof stoyt an' stammer,
A gate mis-chancy;
On the aul' spire, the bells' hie cha'mer,
Dance your bit dancie.

Ding, devil, dunt, destroy, an' ruin,
Wi' carnal stanes the square bestrewin',
Till your loud chaps frae Kyle to Fruin,
Frae hell to heeven,
Tell the guid wark that baith are doin'—
Baith Begg an' Niven.

XII

THE SCOTSMAN'S RETURN FROM ABROAD

(In a letter from Mr. Thomson to Mr. Johnstone)

In mony a foreign pairt I've been,
An' mony an unco ferlie seen,
Since, Mr. Johnstone, you and I
Last walkit upon Cocklerye.
Wi' gleg, observant een, I pass't
By sea an' land, through East and Wast,
And still in ilka age an' station
Saw naething but abomination.
In thir uncovenantit lands
The gangrel Scot uplifts his hands
At lack of a' sectarian füsh'n,
An' cauld religious destitütion.
He rins, puir man, frae place to place,
Tries a' their graceless means o' grace,
Preacher on preacher, kirk on kirk—
This yin a stot an' thon a stirk—
A bletherin' clan, no warth a preen,
As bad as Smith of Aiberdeen!

At last, across the weary faem,
Frae far, outlandish pairts I came.
On ilka side o' me I fand
Fresh tokens o' my native land.
Wi' whatna joy I hailed them a'—
The hilltaps standin' raw by raw,
The public house, the Hielan' birks,
And a' the bonny U. P. kirks!
But maistly thee, the bluid o' Scots,
Frae Maidenkirk to John o' Grots,
The king o' drinks, as I conceive it,
Talisker, Isla, or Glenlivet!

For after years wi' a pockmantie
Frae Zanzibar to Alicante,
In mony a fash an' sair affliction
I gie't as my sincere conviction—
Of a' their foreign tricks an' pliskies,
I maist abominate their whiskies.
Nae doot, themsel's, they ken it weel,
An' wi' a hash o' leemon peel,
An' ice an' siccan filth, they ettle
The stawsome kind o' goo to settle;
Sic wersh apothecary's broos wi'
As Scotsmen scorn to fyle their moo's wi'.

An', man, I was a blithe hame-comer
When first I syndit out my rummer.
Ye should hae seen me then, wi' care
The less important pairts prepare;
Syne, weel contentit wi' it a',
Pour in the speerits wi' a jaw!
I didnae drink, I didnae speak—
I only snowkit up the reek.
I was sae pleased therein to paidle,
I sat an' plowtered wi' my ladle.

An' blithe was I, the morrow's morn,
To daunder through the stookit corn.
And after a' my strange mishanters,
Sit doun amang my ain dissenters.

An', man, it was a joy to me
The pu'pit an' the pews to see,
The pennies dirlin' in the plate,
The elders lookin' on in state;
An' 'mang the first, as it befell,
Wha should I see, sir, but yoursel'?

I was, and I will no deny it,
At the first gliff a hantle tryit
To see yoursel' in sic a station—
It seemed a doubtfü' dispensation.
The feelin' was a mere digression;
For shüne I understood the session,
An' mindin' Aiken an' M'Neil,
I wondered they had düne sae weel.
I saw I had mysel' to blame;
For had I but remained at hame,
Aiblins—though no ava' deservin' 't—
They micht hae named your humble servant.

The kirk was filled, the door was steeked;
Up to the pu'pit ance I keeked;
I was mair pleased than I can tell—
It was the minister himsel'!
Proud, proud was I to see his face,
After sae lang awa' frae grace.
Pleased as I was, I'm no denyin'
Some maitters were not edifyin';
For first I fand—an' here was news!—
Mere hymn-books cockin' in the pews—
A humanized abomination,
Unfit for ony congregation.
Syne, while I still was on the tenter,
I scunnered at the new prezentor;
I thocht him gesterin' an' cauld—
A sair declension frae the auld.
Syne, as though a' the faith was wreckit,
The prayer was not what I'd exspeckit.
Himsel', as it appeared to me,
Was no the man he üsed to be.

But just as I was growin' vext
He waled a maist judeecious text,
An' launchin' into his prelections,
Swoopt, wi' a skirl, on a' defections.

O what a gale was on my speerit
To hear the p'ints o' doctrine clearit,
And a' the horrors o' damnation
Set furth wi' faithfü ministration!
Nae shauchlin' testimony here—
We were a' damned, an' that was clear.
I owned, wi' gratitude an' wonder,
He was a pleisure to sit under.

XIII

Late in the nicht in bed I lay,
The winds were at their weary play,
An' tirlin' wa's an' skirlin' wae
Through heev'n they battered;—
On-ding o' hail, on-blaff o' spray,
The tempest blattered.

The masoned house it dinled through;
It dung the ship, it cowped the coo';
The rankit aiks it overthrew,
Had braved a' weathers;
The strang sea-gleds it took an' blew
Awa' like feathers.

The thraes o' fear on a' were shed,
An' the hair rose, an' slumber fled,
An' lichts were lit an' prayers were said
Through a' the kintry;
An' the cauld terror clum in bed
Wi' a' an' sindry.

To hear in the pit-mirk on hie
The brangled collieshangie flie,

The warl' they thocht, wi' land an' sea,
Itsel' wad cowpit;
An' for auld airn, the smashed debris
By God be rowpit.

Meanwhile frae far Aldeboran,
To folks wi' talescopes in han',
O' ships that cowpit, winds that ran,
Nae sign was seen,
But the wee warl' in sunshine span
As bricht's a preen.

I, tae, by God's especial grace,
Dwall denty in a bieldy place,
Wi' hosened feet, wi' shaven face,
Wi' dacent mainners:
A grand example to the race
O' tautit sinners!

The wind may blaw, the heathen rage,
The deil may start on the rampage;—
The sick in bed, the thief in cage—
What's a' to me?
Cosh in my house, a sober sage,
I sit an' see.

An' whiles the bluid spangs to my bree,
To lie sae saft, to live sae free,
While better men maun do an' die
In unco places.
"Whaur's God?" I cry, an' *"Whae is me
To hae sic graces?"*

I mind the fecht the sailors keep,
But fire or can'le, rest or sleep,
In darkness an' the muckle deep;
An' mind beside
The herd that on the hills o' sheep
Has wandered wide.

And yirks the tune into the air
Wi' queer contortions.

—*Lowden's Sabbath Morn*, st. 52.

I mind me on the hoastin' weans—
The penny joes on causey stanes—
The auld folk wi' the crazy banes,
Baith auld an' puir,
That aye maun thole the winds an' rains
An' labor sair.

An' whiles I'm kind o' pleased a blink,
An' kind o' fleyed forby, to think,
For a' my rowth o' meat an' drink
An waste o' crumb,
I'll mebbe have to thole wi' skink
In Kingdom Come.

For God whan jowes the Judgment bell,
Wi' His ain Hand, His Leevin' Sel',
Sall ryve the guid (as Prophets tell)
Frae them that had it;
And in the reamin' pat o' hell,
The rich be scaddit.

O Lord, if this indeed be sae,
Let daw that sair an' happy day!
Again' the warl, grawn auld an' gray,
Up wi' your aixe!
An' let the puir enjoy their play—
I'll thole my paiks.

XIV

MY CONSCIENCE!

Or a' the ills that flesh can fear,
The loss o' frien's, the lack o' gear,
A yowlin' tyke, a glandered mear,
A lassie's nonsense—
There's just ae thing I cannae bear,
An' that's my conscience.

Whan day (an' a' excüse) has gane,
An' wark is düne, an' duty's plain,
An' to my chalmer a' my lane
I creep apairt,
My conscience! hoo the yammerin' pain
Stends to my heart!

A' day wi' various ends in view
The hairsts o' time I had to pu',
An' made a hash wad staw a soo,
Let be a man!—
My conscience! whan my han's were fü',
Whaur were ye than?

An' there were a' the lures o' life,
There pleesure skirlin' on the fife,
There anger, wi' the hotchin' knife
Ground shairp in hell—
My conscience!—you that's like a wife!—
Whaur was yoursel'?

I ken it fine: just waitin' here,
To gar the evil waur appear,
To clart the guid, confüse the clear,
Mis-ca' the great,
My conscience! an' to raise a steer
Whan a's ower late.

Sic-like, some tyke grawn auld and blind,
Whan thieves brok' through the gear to p'ind,
Has lain his dozened length an' grinned
At the disaster;
An' the morn's mornin', wud's the wind,
Yokes on his master.

XV

TO DOCTOR JOHN BROWN

(Whan the dear doctor, dear to a',
Was still amang us here belaw,
I seb my pipes his praise to blaw
Wi' a' my speerit;
But noo, Dear Doctor, he's awa',
An' ne'er can hear it.)

By Lyne and Tyne, by Thames and Tees,
By a' the various river-Dee's,
In Mars and Manor's 'yont the seas
Or here at hame,
Whaure'er there's kindly folk to please,
They ken your name.

They ken your name, they ken your tyke,
They ken the honey from your byke;
But mebbe after a' your fyke
(The trüth to tell)
It's just your honest Rab they like,
An' no yoursel'.

As at the gowff, some canny play'r
Should tee a common ba' wi' care—
Should flourish and deleever fair
His souple shintie—
An' the bar rise into the air,
A leevin' lintie:

Sae in the game we writers play,
There comes to some a bonny day,
When a dear ferlie shall repay
Their years o' strife,
An' like your Rab, their things o' clay,
Spreid wings o' life.

Ye scarce deserved it, I'm afraid—
You that had never learned the trade,
But just some idle mornin' strayed
Into the schüle,
An' picked the fiddle up an' played
Like Neil himsel'.

Your e'e was gleg, your fingers dink;
Ye didna fash yoursel' to think,
But wove, as fast as puss can link,
Your denty wab:—
Ye stapped your pen into the ink,
An' there was Rab!

Sinsyne, whaure'er your fortune lay
By dowie den, by canty brae,
Simmer an' winter, nicht an' day,
Rab was aye wi' ye;
An' a' the folk on a' the way
Were blithe to see ye.

O sir, the gods are kind indeed,
An' hauld ye for an honored heid,
That for a wee bit clarkit screed
Sae weel reward ye,
An' lend—puir Rabbie bein' deid—
His ghaist to guard ye.

For though, whaure'er yoursel' may be,
We've just to turn an' glisk a wee,
An' Rab at heel we're shüre to see
Wi' gladsome caper:—
The bogle of a bogle, he—
A ghaist o' paper!

And as the auld farrand hero sees
In hell a bogle Hercules,
Pit there the lesser deid to please,
While he himsel'
Dwalls wi' the muckle gods at ease
Far raised frae hell:

Sae the true Rabbie far has gane
On kindlier business o' his ain
Wi' aulder frien's; an' his breist-bane
An' stumpie tailie,
He birstles at a new hearth stane
By James and Ailie.

XVI

It's an owercome sooth for age an' youth
And it brooks wi' nae denial,
That the dearest friends are the auldest friends
And the young are just on trial.

There's a rival bauld wi' young an' auld
And it's him that has bereft me;
For the sürest friends are the auldest friends
And the maist o' mine hae left me.

There are kind hearts still, for friends to fill
And fools to take and break them;
But the nearest friends are the auldest friends
And the grave's the place to seek them.

A CHILD'S GARDEN OF VERSES

DEDICATION

To

Alison Cunningham

(FROM HER BOY)

For the long nights you lay awake
And watched for my unworthy sake:
For your most comfortable hand
That led me through the uneven land:
For all the story-books you read:
For all the pains you comforted:
For all you pitied, all you bore,
In sad and happy days of yore:—
My second Mother, my first Wife,
The angel of my infant life—
From the sick child, now well and old,
Take, nurse, the little book you hold!

And grant it, Heaven, that all who read
May find as dear a nurse at need,
And every child who lists my rhyme,
In the bright, fireside, nursery clime,
May hear it in as kind a voice
As made my childish days rejoice!

R. L. S.

A CHILD'S GARDEN OF VERSES

I

BED IN SUMMER

IN winter I get up at night
And dress by yellow candle-light.
In summer quite the other way,
I have to go to bed by day.

I have to go to bed and see
The birds still hopping on the tree,
Or hear the grown-up people's feet
Still going past me in the street.

And does it not seem hard to you,
When all the sky is clear and blue,
And I should like so much to play,
To have to go to bed by day?

II

A THOUGHT

IT is very nice to think
The world is full of meat and drink,
With little children saying grace
In every Christian kind of place.

III

AT THE SEASIDE

WHEN I was down beside the sea
A wooden spade they gave to me
To dig the sandy shore.

My holes were empty like a cup,
In every hole the sea came up,
Till it could come no more.

IV

YOUNG NIGHT THOUGHT

All night long and every night,
When my mamma puts out the light,
I see the people marching by,
As plain as day, before my eye.

Armies and emperors and kings,
All carrying different kinds of things,
And marching in so grand a way,
You never saw the like by day.

So fine a show was never seen,
At the great circus on the green;
For every kind of beast and man
Is marching in that caravan.

At first they move a little slow,
But still the faster on they go,
And still beside them close I keep
Until we reach the town of Sleep.

V

WHOLE DUTY OF CHILDREN

A child should always say what's true
And speak when he is spoken to,
And behave mannerly at table:
At least as far as he is able.

VI

RAIN

THE rain is raining all around
It falls on field and tree,
It rains on the umbrellas here,
And on the ships at sea.

VII

PIRATE STORY

THREE of us afloat in the meadow by the swing,
Three of us aboard in the basket on the lea.
Winds are in the air, they are blowing in the spring,
And waves are on the meadow like the waves there are at sea.

Where shall we adventure, to-day that we're afloat,
Wary of the weather and steering by a star?
Shall it be to Africa, a-steering of the boat,
To Providence, or Babylon, or off to Malabar?

Hi! but here's a squadron a-rowing on the sea—
Cattle on the meadow a-charging with a roar!
Quick, and we'll escape them, they're as mad as they can be,
The wicket is the harbor and the garden is the shore.

VIII

FOREIGN LANDS

UP into the cherry tree
Who should climb but little me?
I held the trunk with both my hands
And looked abroad on foreign lands.

I saw the next door garden lie,
Adorned with flowers before my eye,
And many pleasant places more
That I had never seen before.

I saw the dimpling river pass
And be the sky's blue looking-glass;
The dusty roads go up and down
With people tramping into town.

If I could find a higher tree
Further and further I should see,
To where the grown-up river slips
Into the sea among the ships,

To where the roads on either hand
Lead onward into fairy-land,
Where all the children dine at five,
And all the playthings come alive.

IX

WINDY NIGHTS

Whenever the moon and stars are set,
Whenever the wind is high,
All night long in the dark and wet,
A man goes riding by.
Late in the night when the fires are out,
Why does he gallop and gallop about?

Whenever the trees are crying aloud,
And ships are tossed at sea,
By, on the highway, low and loud,
By at the gallop goes he.
By at the gallop he goes, and then
By he comes back at the gallop again.

X

TRAVEL

I SHOULD like to rise and go
Where the golden apples grow;—
Where below another sky
Parrot islands anchored lie,
And, watched by cockatoos and goats,
Lonely Crusoes building boats;—
Where in sunshine reaching out
Eastern cities, miles about,
Are with mosque and minaret
Among sandy gardens set,
And the rich goods from near and far
Hang for sale in the bazaar;—
Where the Great Wall round China goes,
And on one side the desert blows,
And with bell and voice and drum,
Cities on the other hum;—
Where are forests, hot as fire,
Wide as England, tall as a spire,
Full of apes and cocoanuts
And the negro hunters' huts;—
Where the knotty crocodile
Lies and blinks in the Nile,
And the red flamingo flies
Hunting fish before his eyes;—
Where in jungles, near and far,
Man-devouring tigers are,
Lying close and giving ear
Lest the hunt be drawing near,
Or a comer-by be seen
Swinging in a palanquin;—
Where among the desert sands
Some deserted city stands,
All its children, sweep and prince
Grown to manhood ages since,
Not a foot in street or house,

Not a stir of child or mouse,
And when kindly falls the night,
In all the town no spark of light.
There I'll come when I'm a man
With a camel caravan;
Light a fire in the gloom
Of some dusty dining-room;
See the pictures on the walls,
Heroes, fights and festivals;
And in a corner find the toys
Of the old Egyptian boys.

XI

SINGING

Of speckled eggs the birdie sings
And nests among the trees;
The sailor sings of ropes and things
In ships upon the seas.

The children sing in far Japan,
The children sing in Spain;
The organ with the organ man
Is singing in the rain.

XII

LOOKING FORWARD

When I am grown to man's estate
I shall be very proud and great,
And tell the other girls and boys
Not to meddle with my toys.

But noo the bell is ringin' in;
To tak their places folk begin.

— *Lowden Sabbath Morn*, p. 32

XIII

A GOOD PLAY

We built a ship upon the stairs
All made of the back-bedroom chairs,
And filled it full of sofa pillows
To go a-sailing on the billows.

We took a saw and several nails,
And water in the nursery pails;
And Tom said, "Let us also take
An apple and a slice of cake;"—
Which was enough for Tom and me
To go a-sailing on, till tea.

We sailed along for days and days
And had the very best of plays;
But Tom fell out and hurt his knee,
So there was no one left but me.

XIV

WHERE GO THE BOATS?

Dark brown is the river,
  Golden is the sand.
It flows along forever,
  With trees on either hand.

Green leaves a-floating,
  Castles of the foam,
Boats of mine a-boating—
Where will all come home?

On goes the river
  And out past the mill,
Away down the valley,
  Away down the hill.

Away down the river,
A hundred miles or more,
Other little children
Shall bring my boats ashore.

XV

AUNTIE'S SKIRTS

Whenever Auntie moves around,
Her dresses make a curious sound;
They trail behind her up the floor,
And trundle after through the door.

XVI

THE LAND OF COUNTERPANE

When I was sick and lay a-bed,
I had two pillows at my head,
And all my toys beside me lay
To keep me happy all the day.

And sometimes for an hour or so
I watched my leaden soldiers go,
With different uniforms and drills,
Among the bed-clothes through the hills;

And sometimes sent my ships in fleets
All up and down among the sheets;
Or brought my trees and houses out,
And planted cities all about.

I was the giant great and still
That sits upon the pillow-hill,
And sees before him, dale and plain,
The pleasant land of counterpane.

XVII

THE LAND OF NOD

From breakfast on through all the day
At home among my friends I stay;
But every night I go abroad
Afar into the land of Nod.

All by myself I have to go,
With none to tell me what to do—
All alone beside the streams
And up the mountain-sides of dreams.

The strangest things are there for me,
Both things to eat and things to see
And many frightening sights abroad
Till morning in the land of Nod.

Try as I like to find the way,
I never can get back by day,
Nor can remember plain and clear
The curious music that I hear.

XVIII

MY SHADOW

I have a little shadow that goes in and out with me,
And what can be the use of him is more than I can see.
He is very, very like me from the heels up to the head;
And I see him jump before me, when I jump into my bed.

The funniest thing about him is the way he likes to grow—
Not at all like proper children, which is always very slow;
For he sometimes shoots up taller like an india rubber
ball,
And he sometimes gets so little that there's none of him
at all.

He hasn't got a notion of how children ought to play,
And can only make a fool of me in every sort of way.
He stays so close beside me, he's a coward you can see;
I'd think shame to stick to nursie as that shadow sticks
to me!

One morning, very early, before the sun was up,
I rose and found the shining dew on every buttercup;
But my lazy little shadow, like an arrant sleepy-head,
Had stayed at home behind me and was fast asleep in bed.

XIX

SYSTEM

EVERY night my prayers I say,
And get my dinner every day;
And every day that I've been good,
I get an orange after food.

The child that is not clean and neat,
With lots of toys and things to eat,
He is a naughty child, I'm sure—
Or else his dear papa is poor.

XX

A GOOD BOY

I WOKE before the morning, I was happy all the day,
I never said an ugly word, but smiled and stuck to play.

And now at last the sun is going down behind the wood,
And I am very happy, for I know that I've been good.

My bed is waiting cool and fresh, with linen smooth and
fair,
And I must off to sleepsin-by, and not forget my prayer.

I know that, till to-morrow I shall see the sun arise,
No ugly dream shall fright my mind, no ugly sight my eyes,
But slumber hold me tightly till I waken in the dawn,
And hear the thrushes singing in the lilacs round the lawn.

XXI

ESCAPE AT BEDTIME

The lights from the parlor and kitchen shone out
Through the blinds and the windows and bars;
And high overhead and all moving about,
There were thousands of millions of stars.

There ne'er were such thousands of leaves on a tree,
Nor of people in church or the Park,
As the crowds of the stars that looked down upon me,
And that glittered and winked in the dark.

The Dog, and the Plow, and the Hunter, and all,
And the star of the sailor, and Mars,
These shone in the sky, and the pail by the wall
Would be half full of water and stars.

They saw me at last, and they chased me with cries,
And they soon had me packed into bed;
But the glory kept shining and bright in my eyes,
And the stars going round in my head.

XXII

MARCHING SONG

Bring the comb and play upon it!
Marching, here we come!
Willie cocks his highland bonnet,
Johnnie beats the drum.

Mary Jane commands the party,
  Peter leads the rear;
Feet in time, alert and hearty,
  Each a Grenadier!

All in the most martial manner
  Marching double-quick;
While the napkin like a banner
  Waves upon the stick!

Here's enough of fame and pillage,
  Great commander Jane!
Now that we've been round the village,
  Let's go home again.

XXIII

THE COW

The friendly cow all red and white,
  I love with all my heart:
She gives me cream with all her might,
  To eat with apple-tart.

She wanders lowing here and there,
  And yet she cannot stray,
All in the pleasant open air,
  The pleasant light of day;

And blown by all the winds that pass
  And wet with all the showers,
She walks among the meadow grass
  And eats the meadow flowers.

XXIV

HAPPY THOUGHT

The world is so full of a number of things,
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings.

XXV

THE WIND

I saw you toss the kites on high
And blow the birds about the sky;
And all around I heard you pass,
Like ladies' skirts across the grass—
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

I saw the different things you did,
But always you yourself you hid,
I felt you push, I heard you call,
I could not see yourself at all—
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

O you that are so strong and cold,
O blower, are you young or old?
Are you a beast of field and tree,
Or just a stronger child than me?
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

XXVI

KEEPSAKE MILL

Over the borders, a sin without pardon,
Breaking the branches and crawling below,
Out through the breach in the wall of the garden,
Down by the banks of the river, we go.

Here is the mill with the humming of thunder,
Here is the weir with the wonder of foam,
Here is the sluice with the race running under—
Marvelous places, though handy to home!

Sounds of the village grow stiller and stiller,
Stiller the notes of the birds on the hill;
Dusty and dim are the eyes of the miller,
Deaf are his ears with the moil of the mill.

Years may go by, and the wheel in the river
Wheels as it wheels for us, children, to-day,
Wheel and keep roaring and foaming forever
Long after all of the boys are away.

Home from the Indies and home from the ocean,
Heroes and soldiers we all shall come home;
Still we shall find the old mill-wheel in motion,
Turning and churning that river to foam.

You with the bean that I gave when we quarreled,
I with your marble of Saturday last,
Honored and old and all gayly appareled,
Here we shall meet and remember the past.

XXVII

GOOD AND BAD CHILDREN

Children, you are very little,
And your bones are very brittle;
If you would grow great and stately,
You must try to walk sedately.

You must still be bright and quiet,
And content with simple diet;
And remain through all bewild'ring,
Innocent and honest children.

Happy hearts and happy faces,
Happy play in grassy places—
That was how in ancient ages,
Children grew to kings and sages.

But the unkind and the unruly,
And the sort who eat unduly,
They must never hope for glory—
Theirs is quite a different story!

Cruel children, crying babies,
All grow up as geese and gabies,
Hated, as their age increases,
By their nephews and their nieces.

XXVIII
FOREIGN CHILDREN

Little Indian, Sioux or Crow,
Little frosty Eskimo,
Little Turk or Japanee,
O! don't you wish that you were me?

You have seen the scarlet trees
And the lions over seas;
You have eaten ostrich eggs,
And turned the turtles off their legs.

Such a life is very fine,
But it's not so nice as mine:
You must often, as you trod,
Have wearied *not* to be abroad.

You have curious things to eat,
I am fed on proper meat;
You must dwell beyond the foam,
But I am safe and live at home.

Little Indian, Sioux or Crow,
Little frosty Eskimo,
Little Turk or Japanee,
O! don't you wish that you were me?

XXIX

THE SUN'S TRAVELS

The sun is not a-bed, when I
At night upon my pillow lie;
Still round the earth his way he takes,
And morning after morning makes.

While here at home, in shining day,
We round the sunny garden play,
Each little Indian sleepy-head
Is being kissed and put to bed.

And when at eve I rise from tea,
Day dawns beyond the Atlantic Sea,
And all the children in the West
Are getting up and being dressed.

XXX

THE LAMPLIGHTER

My tea is nearly ready and the sun has left the sky;
It's time to take the window to see Leerie going by;
For every night at teatime and before you take your seat,
With lantern and with ladder he comes posting up the street.

Now Tom would be a driver and Maria go to sea,
And my papa's a banker and as rich as he can be;
But I, when I am stronger and can choose what I'm to do,
O Leerie, I'll go round at night and light the lamps with you.

For we are very lucky, with a lamp before the door,
And Leerie stops to light it as he lights so many more;
And O! before you hurry by with ladder and with light,
O Leerie, see a little child and nod to him to-night!

XXXI

MY BED IS A BOAT

My bed is like a little boat;
Nurse helps me in when I embark;
She girds me in my sailor's coat
And starts me in the dark.

At night I go on board and say
Good-night to all my friends in shore;
I shut my eyes and sail away
And see and hear no more.

And sometimes things to bed I take,
As prudent sailors have to do:
Perhaps a slice of wedding-cake,
Perhaps a toy or two.

All night across the dark we steer:
But when the day returns at last,
Safe in my room beside the pier,
I find my vessel fast.

XXXII

THE MOON

The moon has a face like the clock in the hall;
She shines on thieves on the garden wall,
On streets and fields and harbor quays,
And birdies asleep in the forks of the trees.

The squalling cat and the squeaking mouse,
The howling dog by the door of the house,
The bat that lies in bed at noon,
All love to be out by the light of the moon.

But all of the things that belong to the day
Cuddle to sleep to be out of her way;

And flowers and children close their eyes
Till up in the morning the sun shall arise.

XXXIII

THE SWING

How do you like to go up in a swing,
  Up in the air so blue?
Oh, I do think it the pleasantest thing
  Ever a child can do!

Up in the air and over the wall,
  Till I can see so wide,
Rivers and trees and cattle and all
  Over the countryside—

Till I look down on the garden green
  Down on the roof so brown—
Up in the air I go flying again,
  Up in the air and down!

XXXIV

TIME TO RISE

A BIRDIE with a yellow bill
Hopped upon the window-sill,
Cocked his shining eye and said:
"Ain't you 'shamed, you sleepy-head?"

XXXV

LOOKING-GLASS RIVER

SMOOTH it slides upon its travel,
  Here a wimple, there a gleam—
    O the clean gravel!
    O the smooth stream!

Sailing blossoms, silver fishes,
Paven pools as clear as air—
How a child wishes
To live down there!

We can see our colored faces
Floating on the shaken pool
Down in cool places,
Dim and very cool;

Till a wind or water wrinkle,
Dipping martin, plumping trout,
Spreads in a twinkle
And blots all out.

See the rings pursue each other;
All below grows black as night,
Just as if mother
Had blown out the light!

Patience, children, just a minute—
See the spreading circles die;
The stream and all in it
Will clear by-and-by.

XXXVI

FAIRY BREAD

Come up here, O dusty feet!
Here is fairy bread to eat.
Here in my retiring room,
Children, you may dine
On the golden smell of broom
And the shade of pine;
And when you have eaten well,
Fairy stories hear and tell.

XXXVII

FROM A RAILWAY CARRIAGE

Faster than fairies, faster than witches,
Bridges and houses, hedges and ditches;
And charging along like troops in a battle,
All through the meadows the horses and cattle:
All of the sights of the hill and the plain
Fly as thick as driving rain;
And ever again in the wink of an eye,
Painted stations whistle by.
Here is a child who clambers and scrambles,
All by himself and gathering brambles;
Here is a tramp who stands and gazes;
And there is the green for stringing the daisies!
Here is a cart run away in the road
Lumping along with man and load;
And here is a mill and there is a river:
Each a glimpse and gone forever!

XXXVIII

WINTER-TIME

Late lies the wintry sun a-bed,
A frosty, fiery sleepy-head;
Blinks but an hour or two; and then,
A blood-red orange, sets again.

Before the stars have left the skies,
At morning in the dark I rise;
And shivering in my nakedness,
By the cold candle, bathe and dress.

Close by the jolly fire I sit
To warm my frozen bones a bit;
Or with a reindeer-sled explore
The colder countries round the door.

When to go out my nurse doth wrap
Me in my comforter and cap:
The cold wind burns my face, and blows
Its frosty pepper up my nose.

Black are my steps on silver sod;
Thick blows my frosty breath abroad;
And tree and house, and hill and lake,
Are frosted like a wedding-cake.

XXXIX

THE HAYLOFT

Through all the pleasant meadow-side
The grass grew shoulder-high,
Till the shining scythes went far and wide
And cut it down to dry.

These green and sweetly-smelling crops
They led in wagons home:
And they piled them here in mountain-tops
For mountaineers to roam.

Here is Mount Clear, Mount Rusty Nail,
Mount Eagle and Mount High;—
The mice that in these mountains dwell,
No happier are than I!

O what a joy to clamber there,
O what a place for play,
With the sweet, the dim, the dusty air,
The happy hills of hay.

XL

FAREWELL TO THE FARM

The coach is at the door at last;
The eager children mounting fast
And kissing hands, in chorus sing:
Good-by, good-by, to everything!

To house and garden, field and lawn
The meadow-gates we swung upon,
To pump and stable, tree and swing,
Good-by, good-by to everything!

And fare you well for evermore,
O ladder at the hayloft door,
O hayloft where the cobwebs cling,
Good-by, good-by, to everything!

Crack goes the whip, and off we go;
The trees and houses smaller grow;
Last, round the woody turn we swing:
Good-by, good-by, to everything!

XLI

NORTHWEST PASSAGE

1. Good-Night

When the bright lamp is carried in,
The sunless hours again begin;
O'er all without, in field and lane,
The haunted night returns again.

Now we behold the embers flee
About the firelit hearth; and see
Our faces painted as we pass,
Like pictures, on the window-glass.

Must we to bed indeed? Well then,
Let us arise and go like men,
And face with an undaunted tread
The long black passage up to bed.

Farewell, O brother, sister, sire!
O pleasant party round the fire!
The songs you sing, the tales you tell,
Till far to-morrow, fare ye well!

2. Shadow March

All round the house is the jet-black night;
It stares through the window-pane;
It crawls in the corners, hiding from the light,
And it moves with the moving flame.

Now my little heart goes a-beating like a drum,
With the breath of the Bogie in my hair;
And all round the candle the crooked shadows come
And go marching along up the stair.

The shadow of the balusters, the shadow of the lamp,
The shadow of the child that goes to bed—
All the wicked shadows coming, tramp, tramp, tramp,
With the black night overhead.

3. In Port

Last, to the chamber where I lie
My fearful footsteps patter nigh,
And come from out the cold and gloom
Into my warm and cheerful room.

There, safe arrived, we turn about
To keep the coming shadows out,
And close the happy door at last
On all the perils that we past.

Then, when mamma goes by to bed,
She shall come in with tiptoe tread,
And see me lying warm and fast
And in the Land of Nod at last.

THE CHILD ALONE

I

THE UNSEEN PLAYMATE

WHEN children are playing alone on the green,
In comes the playmate that never was seen.
When children are happy and lonely and good,
The Friend of the Children comes out of the wood.

Nobody heard him and nobody saw,
His is a picture you never could draw,
But he's sure to be present, abroad or at home,
When children are happy and playing alone.

He lies in the laurels, he runs on the grass,
He sings when you tinkle the musical glass;
Whene'er you are happy and cannot tell why,
The Friend of the Children is sure to be by!

He loves to be little, he hates to be big,
'Tis he that inhabits the caves that you dig;
'Tis he when you play with your soldiers of tin
That sides with the Frenchmen and never can win.

'Tis he when at night you go off to your bed,
Bids you go to your sleep and not trouble your head;
For wherever they're lying, in cupboard or shelf,
'Tis he will take care of your playthings himself!

II

MY SHIP AND I

O IT's I that am the captain of a tidy little ship,
Of a ship that goes a-sailing on the pond;
And my ship it keeps a-turning all around and all about;

But when I'm a little older, I shall find the secret out
How to send my vessel sailing on beyond.

For I mean to grow as little as the dolly at the helm,
And the dolly I intend to come alive;
And with him beside to help me, it's a-sailing I shall go,
It's a-sailing on the water, where the jolly breezes blow
And the vessel goes a divie-divie-dive.

O it's then you'll see me sailing through the rushes and the reeds,
And you'll hear the water singing at the prow;
For beside the dolly sailor I'm to voyage and explore,
To land upon the island where no dolly was before,
And to fire the penny cannon in the bow.

III

MY KINGDOM

Down by a shining water well
I found a very little dell,
No higher than my head.
The heather and the gorse about
In summer bloom were coming out,
Some yellow and some red.

I called the little pool a sea;
The little hills were big to me;
For I am very small.
I made a boat, I made a town,
I searched the caverns up and down,
And named them one and all.

And all about was mine, I said,
The little sparrows overhead,
The little minnows too.
This was the world and I was king;
For me the bees came by to sing,
For me the swallows flew.

I played there were no deeper seas,
Nor any wider plains than these,
Nor other kings than me.
At last I heard my mother call
Out from the house at evenfall,
To call me home to tea.

And I must rise and leave my dell,
And leave my dimpled water well,
And leave my heather blooms.
Alas! and as my home I neared
How very big my nurse appeared,
How great and cool the rooms!

IV

PICTURE BOOKS IN WINTER

Summer fading, winter comes—
Frosty mornings, tingling thumbs,
Window robins, winter rooks,
And the picture story-books.

Water now is turned to stone
Nurse and I can walk upon;
Still we find the flowing brooks
In the picture story-books.

All the pretty things put by,
Wait upon the children's eye,
Sheep and shepherds, trees and crooks,
In the picture story-books.

We may see how all things are,
Seas and cities, near and far,
And the flying fairies' looks,
In the picture story-books.

How am I to sing your praise,
Happy chimney-corner days,
Sitting safe in nursery nooks,
Reading picture story-books?

V

MY TREASURES

These nuts that I keep in the back of the nest
Where all my lead soldiers are lying at rest,
Were gathered in autumn by nursie and me
In a wood with a well by the side of the sea.

This whistle we made (and how clearly it sounds!)
By the side of a field at the end of the grounds.
Of a branch of a plane, with a knife of my own,
It was nursie who made it, and nursie alone!

The stone, with the white and the yellow and gray,
We discovered I cannot tell *how* far away;
And I carried it back, although weary and cold,
For though father denies it, I'm sure it is gold.

But of all of my treasures the last is the king,
For there's very few children possess such a thing;
And that is a chisel, both handle and blade,
Which a man who was really a carpenter made.

VI

BLOCK CITY

What are you able to build with your blocks?
Castles and palaces, temples and docks.
Rain may keep raining, and others go roam,
But I can be happy and building at home.

Let the sofa be mountains, the carpet be sea,
There I'll establish a city for me:
A kirk and a mill and a palace beside,
And a harbor as well where my vessels may ride.

Great is the palace with pillar and wall,
A sort of tower on the top of it all,
And steps coming down in an orderly way,
To where my toy vessels lie safe in the bay.

This one is sailing and that one is moored:
Hark to the song of the sailors on board!
And see on the steps of my palace the kings
Coming and going with presents and things!

Now I have done with it, down let it go!
All in a moment the town is laid low.
Block upon block lying scattered and free,
What is there left of my town by the sea?

Yet as I saw it, I see it again,
The kirk and the palace, the ships and the men,
And as long as I live and where'er I may be,
I'll always remember my town by the sea.

VII

THE LAND OF STORY-BOOKS

At evening when the lamp is lit,
Around the fire my parents sit;
They sit at home and talk and sing,
And do not play at anything.

Now, with my little gun, I crawl
All in the dark along the wall,
And follow round the forest track
Away behind the sofa back.

There, in the night, where none can spy,
All in my hunter's camp I lie,
And play at books that I have read
Till it is time to go to bed.

These are the hills, these are the woods,
These are my starry solitudes;
And there the river by whose brink
The roaring lions come to drink.

I see the others far away
As if in firelit camp they lay,
And I, like to an Indian scout,
Around their party prowled about.

So, when my nurse comes in for me,
Home I return across the sea,
And go to bed with backward looks
At my dear land of Story-books.

VIII

ARMIES IN THE FIRE

The lamps now glitter down the street;
Faintly sound the falling feet;
And the blue even slowly falls
About the garden trees and walls.

Now in the falling of the gloom
The red fire paints the empty room:
And warmly on the roof it looks,
And flickers on the backs of books.

Armies march by tower and spire
Of cities blazing, in the fire;—
Till as I gaze with staring eyes,
The armies fade, the luster dies.

Then once again the glow returns;
Again the phantom city burns;
And down the red-hot valley, lo!
The phantom armies marching go!

Blinking embers, tell me true
Where are those armies marching to,
And what the burning city is
That crumbles in your furnaces!

IX

THE LITTLE LAND

When at home alone I sit
And am very tired of it,
I have just to shut my eyes
To go sailing through the skies—
To go sailing far away
To the pleasant Land of Play;
To the fairy land afar
Where the Little People are;
Where the clover-tops are trees,
And the rain-pools are the seas,
And the leaves like little ships
Sail about on tiny trips;
And above the daisy tree
Through the grasses
High o'erhead the Bumble Bee
Hums and passes.

In that forest to and fro
I can wander, I can go;
See the spider and the fly,
And the ants go marching by
Carrying parcels with their feet
Down the green and grassy street.
I can in the sorrel sit
Where the ladybird alit.
I can climb the jointed grass;
And on high
See the greater swallows pass
In the sky,
And the round sun rolling by
Heeding no such things as I.

Through that forest I can pass
Till, as in a looking-glass,
Humming fly and daisy tree
And my tiny self I see,
Painted very clear and neat
On the rain-pool at my feet.
Should a leaflet come to land
Drifting near to where I stand,
Straight I'll board that tiny boat
Round the rain-pool sea to float.

Little thoughtful creatures sit
On the grassy coasts of it;
Little things with lovely eyes
See me sailing with surprise.
Some are clad in armor green—
(These have sure to battle been!)—
Some are pied with every hue,
Black and crimson, gold and blue;
Some have wings and swift are gone;—
But they all look kindly on.

When my eyes I once again
Open, and see all things plain:
High bare walls, great bare floor;
Great big knobs on drawer and door;
Great big people perched on chairs,
Stitching tucks and mending tears,
Each a hill that I could climb,
And talking nonsense all the time—
O dear me,
That I could be
A sailor on the rain-pool sea,
A climber in the clover tree,
And just come back, a sleepy-head,
Late at night to go to bed.

GARDEN DAYS

I

NIGHT AND DAY

WHEN the golden day is done,
Through the closing portal,
Child and garden, flower and sun,
Vanish all things mortal.

As the blinding shadows fall,
As the rays diminish,
Under evening's cloak, they all
Roll away and vanish.

Garden darkened, daisy shut,
Child in bed, they slumber—
Glow-worm in the highway rut,
Mice among the lumber.

In the darkness houses shine,
Parents move with candles;
Till on all the night divine
Turns the bedroom handles.

Till at last the day begins
In the east a-breaking,
In the hedges and the whins
Sleeping birds a-waking.

In the darkness shapes of things,
Houses, trees, and hedges,
Clearer grow: and sparrows' wings
Beat on window ledges.

These shall wake the yawning maid;
  She the door shall open—
Finding dew on garden glade
  And the morning broken.

There my garden grows again
  Green and rosy painted,
As at eve behind the pane
  From my eyes it fainted.

Just as it was shut away,
  Toy-like in the even,
Here I see it glow with day
  Under glowing heaven.

Every path and every plot,
  Every bush of roses,
Every blue forget-me-not
  Where the dew reposes,

"Up!" they cry, "the day is come
  On the smiling valleys:
We have beat the morning drum;
  Playmate, join your allies!"

II

NEST EGGS

Birds all the sunny day
  Flutter and quarrel
Here in the arbor-like
  Tent of the laurel.

Here in the fork
  The brown nest is seated;
Four little blue eggs
  The mother keeps heated.

While we stand watching her,
  Staring like gabies,
Safe in each egg are the
  Bird's little babies.

Soon the frail eggs they shall
  Chip, and upspringing
Make all the April woods
  Merry with singing.

Younger than we are,
  O children, and frailer,
Soon in blue air they'll be,
  Singer and sailor.

We so much older,
  Taller and stronger,
We shall look down on the
  Birdies no longer.

They shall go flying
  With musical speeches
High overhead in the
  Tops of the beeches.

In spite of our wisdom
  And sensible talking,
We on our feet must go
  Plodding and walking.

III

THE FLOWERS

All the names I know from nurse:
Gardener's garters, Shepherd's purse,
Bachelor's buttons, Lady's smock,
And the Lady Hollyhock.

Fairy places, fairy things,
Fairy woods where the wild bee wings,

Tiny trees for tiny dames—
These must all be fairy names!

Tiny woods below whose boughs
Shady fairies weave a house;
Tiny tree-tops, rose or thyme,
Where the braver fairies climb!

Fair are grown-up people's trees,
But the fairest woods are these;
Where if I were not so tall,
I should live for good and all.

IV

SUMMER SUN

Great is the sun, and wide he goes
Through empty heaven without repose;
And in the blue and glowing days
More thick than rain he showers his rays.

Though closer still the blinds we pull
To keep the shady parlor cool,
Yet he will find a chink or two
To slip his golden fingers through.

The dusty attic, spider-clad,
He through the key-hole maketh glad;
And through the broken edge of tiles,
Into the laddered hayloft smiles.

Meantime his golden face around
He bares to all the garden ground,
And sheds a warm and glittering look
Among the ivy's inmost nook.

Above the hills, along the blue,
Round the bright air with footing true,
To please the child, to paint the rose,
The gardener of the World, he goes.

V

THE DUMB SOLDIER

When the grass was closely mown,
Walking on the lawn alone,
In the turf a hole I found
And hid a soldier underground.

Spring and daisies came apace;
Grasses hide my hiding-place;
Grasses run like a green sea
O'er the lawn up to my knee.

Under grass alone he lies,
Looking up with leaden eyes,
Scarlet coat and pointed gun,
To the stars and to the sun.

When the grass is ripe like grain,
When the scythe is stoned again,
When the lawn is shaven clear,
Then my hole shall reappear.

I shall find him, never fear,
I shall find my grenadier;
But for all that's gone and come,
I shall find my soldier dumb.

He has lived, a little thing,
In the grassy woods of spring;
Done, if he could tell me true
Just as I should like to do.

He has seen the starry hours
And the springing of the flowers;
And the fairy things that pass
In the forests of the grass.

In the silence he has heard
Talking bee and ladybird,
And the butterfly has flown,
O'er him as he lay alone.

Not a word will he disclose,
Not a word of all he knows.
I must lay him on the shelf,
And make up the tale myself.

VI

AUTUMN FIRES

In the other gardens
  And all up the vale,
From the autumn bonfires
  See the smoke trail!

Pleasant summer over
  And all the summer flowers,
The red fire blazes,
  The gray smoke towers.

Sing a song of seasons!
  Something bright in all!
Flowers in the summer,
  Fires in the fall!

VII

THE GARDENER

The gardener does not love to talk,
He makes me keep the gravel walk;
And when he puts his tools away,
He locks the door and takes the key.

Away behind the currant row
Where no one else but cook may go,
Far in the plots, I see him dig,
Old and serious, brown and big.

He digs the flowers, green, red, and blue,
Nor wishes to be spoken to.
He digs the flowers and cuts the hay,
And never seems to want to play.

Silly gardener! summer goes,
And winter comes with pinching toes.
When in the garden bare and brown
You must lay your barrow down.

Well now, and while the summer stays,
To profit by these garden days,
O how much wiser you would be
To play at Indian wars with me!

VIII

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

Dear Uncle Jim, this garden ground
That now you smoke your pipe around,
Has seen immortal actions done
And valiant battles lost and won.

Here we had best on tip-toe tread,
While I for safety march ahead,
For this is that enchanted ground
Where all who loiter slumber sound.

Here is the sea, here is the sand,
Here is simple Shepherd's Land,
Here are the fairy hollyhocks,
And there are Ali Baba's rocks.

But yonder, see! apart and high,
Frozen Siberia lies; where I,
With Robert Bruce and William Tell,
Was bound by an enchanter's spell.

There, then, awhile in chains we lay,
In wintry dungeons, far from day;
But ris'n at length, with might and main,
Our iron fetters burst in twain.

Then all the horns were blown in town;
And to the ramparts clanging down;
All the giants leaped to horse
And charged behind us through the gorse.

On we rode, the others and I,
Over the mountains blue, and by
The Silver River, the sounding sea,
And the robber woods of Tartary.

A thousand miles we galloped fast,
And down the witches' lane we passed,
And rode amain, with brandished sword,
Up to the middle, through the ford.

Last we drew rein—a weary three—
Upon the lawn, in time for tea,
And from our steeds alighted down
Before the gates of Babylon.

ENVOYS

I

TO WILLIE AND HENRIETTA

IF two may read aright
These rhymes of old delight
And house and garden play,
You two, my cousins, and you only, may.

You in a garden green
With me were king and queen,
Were hunter, soldier, tar,
And all the thousand things that children are.

Now in the elders' seat
We rest with quiet feet,
And from the window-bay
We watch the children, our successors, play.

"Time was," the golden head
Irrevocably said;
But time which none can bind,
While flowing fast away, leaves love behind.

II

TO MY MOTHER

You too, my mother, read my rhymes
For love of unforgotten times,
And you may chance to hear once more
The little feet along the floor.

III

TO AUNTIE

Chief of our aunts—not only I,
But all your dozen of nurslings cry—
What did the other children do?
And what were childhood, wanting you?

IV

TO MINNIE

THE red room with the giant bed
Where none but elders laid their head;
The little room where you and I
Did for a while together lie
And, simple suitor, I your hand
In decent marriage did demand;
The great day nursery, best of all,
With pictures pasted on the wall
And leaves upon the blind—
A pleasant room wherein to wake
And hear the leafy garden shake
And rustle in the wind—
And pleasant there to lie in bed
And see the pictures overhead—
The wars about Sebastopol,
The grinning guns along the wall,
The daring escalade,
The plunging ships, the bleating sheep,
The happy children ankle-deep
And laughing as they wade:
All these are vanished clean away,
And the old manse is changed to-day;
It wears an altered face
And shields a stranger race.
The river, on from mill to mill,
Flows past our childhood's garden still;

But ah! we children nevermore
Shall watch it from the water-door!
Below the yew—it still is there—
Our phantom voices haunt the air
As we were still at play,
And I can hear them call and say:
"How far is it to Babylon?"

Ah, far enough, my dear,
Far, far enough from here—
Yet you have further gone!
"Can I get there by candle-light?"
So goes the old refrain.
I do not know—perchance you might—
But only, children, hear it right,
Ah, never to return again!
The eternal dawn, beyond a doubt,
Shall break on hill and plain,
And put all stars and candles out,
Ere we be young again.

To you in distant India, these
I send across the seas,
Nor count it far across.
For which of us forgets
The Indian cabinets,
The bones of antelope, the wings of albatross,
The pied and painted birds and beans,
The junks and bangles, beads and screens,
The gods and sacred bells,
And the loud-humming, twisted shells?
The level of the parlor floor
Was honest, homely, Scottish shore;
But when we climbed upon a chair,
Behold the gorgeous East was there!

Be this a fable; and behold
Me in the parlor as of old,
And Minnie just above me set
In the quaint Indian cabinet!

Smiling and kind, you grace a shelf
Too high for me to reach myself.
Reach down a hand, my dear, and take
These rhymes for old acquaintance' sake.

V

TO MY NAME-CHILD

1

Some day soon this rhyming volume, if you learn with proper speed,
Little Louis Sanchez, will be given you to read.
Then shall you discover, that your name was printed down
By the English printers, long before, in London town.
In the great and busy city where the East and West are met,
All the little letters did the English printer set;
While you thought of nothing, and were still too young to play,
Foreign people thought of you in places far away.

Ay, and while you slept, a baby, over all the English lands
Other little children took the volume in their hands;
Other children questioned, in their homes across the seas:
Who was little Louis, won't you tell us, mother, please?

2

Now that you have spelt your lesson, lay it down and go and play,
Seeking shells and seaweed on the sands of Monterey,
Watching all the mighty whalebones, lying buried by the breeze,
Tiny sandy-pipers, and the huge Pacific seas.

And remember in your playing, as the sea-fog rolls to you,
Long ere you could read it, how I told you what to do;
And that while you thought of no one, nearly half the world away
Some one thought of Louis on the beach of Monterey!

VI

TO ANY READER

As from the house your mother sees
You playing round the garden trees,
So you may see, if you will look
Through the windows of this book,
Another child, far, far away,
And in another garden, play.
But do not think you can at all,
By knocking on the window, call
That child to hear you. He intent
Is all on his play-business bent.
He does not hear; he will not look,
Nor yet be lured out of this book.
For, long ago, the truth to say,
He has grown up and gone away,
And it is but a child of air
That lingers in the garden there.

BALLADS

DEDICATION

To Ori A Ori

Ori, my brother in the island mode,
In every tongue and meaning much my friend,
This story of your country and your clan,
In your loved house, your too much honoured guest,
I made in English. Take it, being done;
And let me sign it with the name you gave.

TERIITERA.

BALLADS

THE SONG OF RAHÉRO

I

THE SLAYING OF TÁMATÉA

IT fell in the days of old, as the men of Taiárapu tell,
A youth went forth to the fishing, and fortune favoured him well.
Támatéa his name: guillible, simple, and kind,
Comely of countenance, nimble of body, empty of mind,
His mother ruled him and loved him beyond the wont of a wife,
Serving the lad for eyes and living herself in his life.
Alone from the sea and the fishing came Támatéa the fair,
Urging his boat to the beach, and the mother awaited him there,
—"Long may you live!" said she. "Your fishing has sped to a wish.
And now let us choose for the king the fairest of all your fish.
For fear inhabits the palace and grudging grows in the land,
Marked is the sluggardly foot and marked the niggardly hand,
The hours and the miles are counted, the tributes numbered and weighed,
And woe to him that comes short, and woe to him that delayed!"

So spoke on the beach the mother, and counselled the wiser thing.
For Rahéro stirred in the country and secretly mined the king.
Nor were the signals wanting of how the leaven wrought,

In the cords of obedience loosed and the tributes grudgingly brought.
And when last to the temple of Oro the boat with the victim sped,
And the priest uncovered the basket and looked on the face of the dead,
Trembling fell upon all at sight of an ominous thing,
For there was the aito dead, and he of the house of the king.

So spake on the beach the mother, matter worthy of note,
And wattled a basket well, and chose a fish from the boat;
And Támatéa the pliable shouldered the basket and went,
And travelled, and sang as he travelled, a lad that was well content.
Still the way of his going was round by the roaring coast,
Where the ring of the reef is broke and the trades run riot the most.
On his left, with smoke as of battle, the billows battered the land;
Unscalable, turreted mountains rose on the inner hand.
And cape, and village, and river, and vale, and mountain above,
Each had a name in the land for men to remember and love;
And never the name of a place, but lo! a song in its praise:
Ancient and unforgotten, songs of the earlier days,
That the elders taught to the young, and at night, in the full of the moon,
Garlanded boys and maidens sang together in tune.
Támatéa the placable went with a lingering foot;
He sang as loud as a bird, he whistled hoarse as a flute;
He broiled in the sun, he breathed in the grateful shadow of trees,
In the icy stream of the rivers he waded over the knees;
And still in his empty mind crowded, a thousand-fold,
The deeds of the strong and the songs of the cunning heroes of old.
And now was he come to a place Taiárapu honoured the most,

Where a silent valley of woods debouched on the noisy coast,
Spewing a level river. There was a haunt of Pai.
There, in his potent youth, when his parents drove him to die,
Honoura lived like a beast, lacking the lamp and the fire,
Washed by the rains of the trade and clotting his hair in the mire;
And there, so mighty his hands, he bent the tree to his foot—
So keen the spur of his hunger, he plucked it naked of fruit.
There, as she pondered the clouds for the shadow of coming ills,
Ahupu, the woman of song, walked on high on the hills.

Of these was Rahéro sprung, a man of a godly race;
And inherited cunning of spirit and beauty of body and face.
Of yore in his youth, as an aito, Rahéro wandered the land,
Delighting maids with his tongue, smiting men with his hand.
Famous he was in his youth; but before the midst of his life
Paused, and fashioned a song of farewell to glory and strife.

House of mine (it went), house upon the sea
Belov'd of all my fathers, more belov'd by me!
Vale of the strong Honoura, deep ravine of Pai,
Again in your woody summits I hear the trade-wind cry.

House of mine, in your walls, strong sounds the sea,
Of all sounds on earth, dearest sound to me.
I have heard the applause of men, I have heard it arise and die:
Sweeter now in my house I hear the trade-wind cry.

These were the words of his singing, other the thought of his heart;
For secret desire of glory vexed him, dwelling apart.
Lazy and crafty he was, and loved to lie in the sun,
And loved the cackle of talk and the true word uttered in fun;
Lazy, he was, his roof was ragged, his table was lean,
And the fish swam safe in his sea, and he gathered the near and the green.
He sat in his house and laughed, but he loathed the king of the land,
And he uttered the grudging word under the covering hand.
Treason spread from his door; and he looked for a day to come,
A day of the crowding people, a day of the summoning drum,
When the vote should be taken, the king be driven forth in disgrace,
And Rahéro, the laughing and lazy, sit and rule in his place.
Here Támatéa came, and beheld the house on the brook;
And Rahéro was there by the way and covered an oven to cook.
Naked he was to the loins, but the tattoo covered the lack,
And the sun and the shadow of palms dappled his muscular back.
Swiftly he lifted his head at the fall of the coming feet,
And the water sprang in his mouth with a sudden desire of meat;
For he marked the basket carried, covered from flies and the sun;
And Rahéro buried his fire, but the meat in his house was done.

Forth he stepped; and took, and delayed the boy, by the hand;
And vaunted the joys of meat and the ancient ways of the land:
—"Our sires of old in Taiárapu, they that created the race,

Ate ever with eager hand, nor regarded season or place,
Ate in the boat at the oar, on the way afoot; and at night
Arose in the midst of dreams to rummage the house for a bite.
It is good for the youth in his turn to follow the way of the sire;
And behold how fitting the time! for here do I cover my fire."
—"I see the fire for the cooking but never the meat to cook,"
Said Támatéa.—"Tut!" said Rahéro. "Here in the brook
And there in the tumbling sea, the fishes are thick as flies,
Hungry like healthy men, and like pigs for savour and size:
Crayfish crowding the river, sea-fish thronging the sea."
—"Well it may be," says the other, "and yet be nothing to me.
Fain would I eat, but alas! I have needful matter in hand,
Since I carry my tribute of fish to the jealous king of the land."
Now at the word a light sprang into Rahéro's eyes.
"I will gain me a dinner," thought he, "and lend the king a surprise."
And he took the lad by the arm, as they stood by the side of the track,
And smiled, and rallied, and flattered, and pushed him forward and back.
It was "You that sing like a bird, I never have heard you sing,"
And "The lads when I was a lad were none so feared of a king.
And of what account is an hour, when the heart is empty of guile?
But come, and sit in the house and laugh with the women awhile;
And I will but drop my hook, and behold! the dinner made."

So Támatéa the pliable hung up his fish in the shade
On a tree by the side of the way; and Rahéro carried him in,

Smiling as smiles the fowler when flutters the bird to the gin,
And chose him a shining hook, and viewed it with sedulous eye,
And breathed and burnished it well on the brawn of his naked thigh,
And set a mat for the gull, and made him be merry and bide,
Like a man concerned for his guest, and the fishing, and nothing beside.
Now when Rahéro was forth, he paused and hearkened, and heard
The gull jest in the house and the women laugh at his word;
And stealthily crossed to the side of the way, to the shady place
Where the basket hung on a mango; and craft transfigured his face.
Deftly he opened the basket, and took of the fat of the fish,
The cut of kings and chieftains, enough for a goodly dish.
This he wrapped in a leaf, set on the fire to cook
And buried; and next the marred remains of the tribute he took,
And doubled and packed them well, and covered the basket close
—"There is a buffet, my king," quoth he, "and a nauseous dose!"—
And hung the basket again in the shade, in a cloud of flies,
—"And there is a sauce to your dinner, king of the crafty eyes!"

Soon as the oven was open, the fish smelt excellent good.
In the shade, by the house of Rahéro, down they sat to their food,
And cleared the leaves in silence or uttered a jest and laughed,
And raising the cocoanut bowls, buried their faces and quaffed.

But chiefly in silence they ate; and soon as the meal was done,
Rahéro feigned to remember and measured the hour by the sun,
And "Támatéa," quoth he, "it is time to be jogging, my lad."

So Támatéa arose, doing ever the thing he was bade,
And carelessly shouldered the basket, and kindly saluted his host;
And again the way of his going was round by the roaring coast.
Long he went; and at length was aware of a pleasant green,
And the stems and shadows of palms, and roofs of lodges between
There sate, in the door of his palace, the king on a kingly seat.
And aitos stood armed around and the yottowas sat at his feet.
But fear was a worm in his heart: fear darted his eyes;
And he probed men's faces for treasons and pondered their speech for lies.
To him came Támatéa, the basket slung in his hand,
And paid him the due obeisance standing as vassals stand.
In silence hearkened the king, and closed the eyes in his face,
Harbouring odious thoughts and the baseless fears of the base;
In silence accepted the gift and sent the giver away.
So Támatéa departed, turning his back on the day.

And lo! as the king sat brooding, a rumour rose in the crowd;
The yottowas nudged and whispered, the commons murmured aloud;
Tittering fell upon all at sight of the impudent thing
At the sight of a gift unroyal flung in the face of a king.
And the face of the king turned white and red with anger and shame

In their midst; and the heart in his body was water and
then was flame;
Till of a sudden, turning, he gripped an aito hard,
A youth that stood with his ómare, one of the daily guard,
And spat in his ear a command, and pointed and uttered
a name,
And hid in the shade of the house his impotent anger and
shame.

Now Támatéa the fool was far on the homeward way,
The rising night in his face, behind him the dying day.
Rahéro saw him go by, and the heart of Rahéro was glad,
Devising shame to the king and nowise harm to the lad;
And all that dwelt by the way saw and saluted him well,
For he had the face of a friend and the news of the town
to tell;
And pleased with the notice of folk, and pleased that his
journey was done,
Támatéa drew homeward, turning his back to the sun.

And now was the hour of the bath in Taiárapu: far and
near
The lovely laughter of bathers rose and delighted his ear.
Night massed in the valleys; the sun on the mountain coast
Struck, end-long; and above the clouds embattled their host,
And glowed and gloomed on the heights; and the heads
of the palms were gems,
And far to the rising eve extended the shade of their
stems;
And the shadow of Támatéa hovered already at home.

And sudden the sound of one coming and running light
as the foam
Struck on his ear; and he turned, and lo! a man on his
track,
Girded and armed with an ómare, following hard at his
back.
At a bound the man was upon him;—and, or ever a word
was said,
The loaded end of the ómare fell and laid him dead.

II

THE VENGING OF TÁMATÉA

THUS was Rahéro's treason; thus and no further it sped;
The king sat safe in his palace and a kindly fool was dead.

But the mother of Támatéa arose with death in her eyes.
All night long, and the next, Taiárapu rang with her cries.
As when a babe in the wood turns with a chill of doubt
And perceives nor home, nor friends, for the trees have closed her about,
The mountain rings and her breast is torn with the voice of despair:
So the lion-like woman idly wearied the air
For awhile, and pierced men's hearing in vain, and wounded their hearts.
But as when the weather changes at sea, in dangerous parts,
And sudden the hurricane wrack unrolls up the front of the sky,
At once the ship lies idle, the sails hang silent on high,
The breath of the wind that blew is blown out like the flame of a lamp,
And the silent armies of death draw near with inaudible tramp:
So sudden, the voice of her weeping ceased; in silence she rose
And passed from the house of her sorrow, a woman clothed with repose,
Carrying death in her breast and sharpening death with her hand.

Hither she went and thither in all the coasts of the land.
They tell that she feared not to slumber alone, in the dead of night,
In accursed places; beheld, unblenched, the ribbon of light
Spin from temple to temple; guided the perilous skiff,

Abhorred not the paths of the mountain and trod the verge of the cliff;
From end to end of the island, though not the distance long,
But forth from king to king carried the tale of her wrong.
To king after king, as they sat in the palace door, she came,
Claiming kinship, declaiming verses, naming her name
And the names of all of her fathers; and still, with a heart on the rack,
Jested to capture a hearing and laughed when they jested back:
So would deceive them awhile, and change and return in a breath,
And on all the men of Vaiau imprecate instant death;
And tempt her kings—for Vaiau was a rich and prosperous land,
And flatter—for who would attempt it but warriors mighty of hand?
And change in a breath again and rise in a strain of song,
Invoking the beaten drums, beholding the fall of the strong,
Calling the fowls of the air to come and feast on the dead.
And they held the chin in silence, and heard her, and shook the head;
For they knew the men of Taiárapu famous in battle and feast,
Marvellous eaters and smiters: the men of Vaiau not least.

To the land of the Námunu-úra, to Paea, at length she came,
To men who were foes to the Tevas and hated their race and name.
There was she well received, and spoke with Hiopa the king.
And Hiopa listened, and weighed, and wisely considered the thing.
"Here in the back of the isle we dwell in a sheltered place,"
Quoth he to the woman, "in quiet, a weak and peaceable race.

But far in the teeth of the wind lofty Taiárapu lies;
Strong blows the wind of the trade on its seaward face, and cries
Aloud in the top of arduous mountains, and utters its song
In green continuous forests. Strong is the wind, and strong
And fruitful and hardy the race, famous in battle and feast,
Marvellous eaters and smiters: the men of Vaiau not least.
Now hearken to me, my daughter, and hear a word of the wise:
How a strength goes linked with a weakness, two by two, like the eyes.
They can wield the ómare well and cast the javelin far;
Yet are they greedy and weak as the swine and the children are.
Plant we, then, here at Paea, a garden of excellent fruits;
Plant we bananas and kava and taro, the king of roots;
Let the pigs in Paea be tapu and no man fish for a year;
And of all the meat in Tahiti gather we threefold here.
So shall the fame of our plenty fill the island, and so,
At last, on the tongue of rumour, go where we wish it to go.
Then shall the pigs of Taiárapu raise their snouts in the air;
But we sit quiet and wait, as the fowler sits by the snare,
And tranquilly fold our hands, till the pigs come nosing the food:
But meanwhile build us a house of Trotéa, the stubborn wood,
Bind it with incombustible thongs, set a roof to the room,
Too strong for the hands of a man to dissever or fire to consume;
And there, when the pigs come trotting, there shall the feast be spread,
There shall the eye of the morn enlighten the feasters dead.
So be it done; for I have a heart that pities your state,

And Nateva and Námunu-úra are fire and water for hate."

All was done as he said, and the gardens prospered; and now
The fame of their plenty went out, and word of it came to Vaiau.
For the men of Námunu-úra sailed, to the windward far,
Lay in the offing by south where the towns of the Tevas are,
And cast overboard of their plenty; and lo! at the Tevas' feet
The surf on all of the beaches tumbled treasures of meat.
In the salt of the sea, a harvest tossed with the refluent foam;
And the children gleaned it in playing, and ate and carried it home;
And the elders stared and debated, and wondered and passed the jest,
But whenever a guest came by eagerly questioned the guest;
And little by little, from one to another, the word went round:
"In all the borders of Paea the victual rots on the ground,
And swine are plenty as rats. And now, when they fare to the sea,
The men of the Námunu-úra glean from under the tree
And load the canoe to the gunwale with all that is toothsome to eat;
And all day long on the sea the jaws are crushing the meat,
The steersman eats at the helm, the rowers munch at the oar,
And at length, when their bellies are full, overboard with the store!"
Now was the word made true, and soon as the bait was bare,
All the pigs of Taiárapu raised their snouts in the air.
Songs were recited, and kinship was counted, and tales were told

How war had severed of late but peace had cemented of old
The clans of the island. "To war," said they, "now set we an end,
And hie to the Námunu-úra even as a friend to a friend."

So judged, and a day was named; and soon as the morning broke,
Canoes were thrust in the sea and the houses emptied of folk.
Strong blew the wind of the south, the wind that gathers the clan;
Along all the line of the reef the clamorous surges ran;
And the clouds were piled on the top of the island mountain-high,
A mountain throned on a mountain. The fleet of canoes swept by
In the midst, on the green lagoon, with a crew released from care,
Sailing an even water, breathing a summer air,
Cheered by a cloudless sun; and ever to left and right,
Bursting surge on the reef, drenching storms on the height.
So the folk of Vaiau sailed and were glad all day,
Coasting the palm-tree cape and crossing the populous bay
By all the towns of the Tevas; and still as they bowled along,
Boat would answer to boat with jest and laughter and song,
And the people of all the towns trooped to the sides of the sea
And gazed from under the hand or sprang aloft on the tree,
Hailing and cheering. Time failed them for more to do;
The holiday village careened to the wind, and was gone from view
Swift as a passing bird; and ever as onward it bore,
Like the cry of the passing bird, bequeathed its song to the shore—

Desirable laughter of maids and the cry of delight of the child.
And the gazer, left behind, stared at the wake and smiled.
By all the towns of the Tevas they went, and Pápara last,
The home of the chief, the place of muster in war; and passed
The march of the lands of the clan, to the lands of an alien folk.
And there, from the dusk of the shoreside palms, a column of smoke
Mounted and wavered and died in the gold of the setting sun,
"Paea!" they cried. "It is Paea." And so was the voyage done.

In the early fall of the night, Hiopa came to the shore,
And beheld and counted the comers, and lo, there were forty score:
The pelting feet of the babes that ran already and played,
The clean-lipped smile of the boy, the slender breasts of the maid,
And the mighty limbs of women, stalwart mothers of men.
The sires stood forth unabashed; but a little back from his ken
Clustered the scarcely nubile, the lads and maids, in a ring,
Fain of each other, afraid of themselves, aware of the king
And aping behaviour, but clinging together with hands and eyes,
With looks that were kind like kisses, and laughter tender as sighs.
There, too, the grandsire stood, raising his silver crest,
And the impotent hands of a suckling groped in his barren breast.
The childhood of love, the pair well married, the innocent brood,
The tale of the generations repeated and ever renewed—
Hiopa beheld them together, all the ages of man,
And a moment shook in his purpose.

But these were the foes of his clan,
And he trod upon pity, and came, and civilly greeted the king,
And gravely entreated Rahéro; and for all that could fight or sing,
And claimed a name in the land, had fitting phrases of praise;
But with all who were well-descended he spoke of the ancient days.
And "'Tis true," said he, "that in Paea the victual rots on the ground;
But, friends, your number is many; and pigs must be hunted and found,
And the lads troop to the mountains to bring the féis down,
And around the bowls of the kava cluster the maids of the town.
So, for to-night, sleep here; but king, common, and priest
To-morrow, in order due, shall sit with me in the feast."

Sleepless the live-long night, Hiopa's followers toiled.
The pigs screamed and were slaughtered; the spars of the guest-house oiled,
The leaves spread on the floor. In many a mountain glen
The moon drew shadows of trees on the naked bodies of men
Plucking and bearing fruits; and in all the bounds of the town
Red glowed the cocoanut fires and were buried and trodden down.
Thus did seven of the yottowas toil with their tale of the clan,
But the eighth wrought with his lads, hid from the sight of man.
In the deeps of the woods they laboured, piling the fuel high
In fagots, the load of a man, fuel seasoned and dry,
Thirsty to seize upon fire and apt to blurt into flame.

And now was the day of the feast. The forests, as morning came,
Tossed in the wind, and the peaks quaked in the blaze of the day
And the cocoanuts showered on the ground, rebounding and rolling away:
A glorious morn for a feast, a famous wind for a fire.
To the hall of feasting Hiopa led them, mother and sire
And maid and babe in a tale, the whole of the holiday throng.
Smiling they came, garlanded green, not dreaming of wrong;
And for every three, a pig tenderly cooked in the ground,
Waited; and féi, the staff of life, heaped in a mound
For each where he sat;—for each, bananas roasted and raw
Piled with a bountiful hand, as for horses hay and straw
Are stacked in a stable; and fish, the food of desire,
And plentiful vessels of sauce, and breadfruit gilt in the fire;—
And kava was common as water. Feasts have there been ere now,
And many, but never a feast like that of the folk of Vaiau.
All day long they ate with the resolute greed of brutes,
And turned from the pigs to the fish, and again from the fish to the fruits,
And emptied the vessels of sauce, and drank of the kava deep;
Till the young lay stupid as stones, and the strongest nodded to sleep.
Sleep that was mighty as death and blind as a moonless night
Tethered them hand and foot; and their souls were drowned, and the light
Was cloaked from their eyes. Senseless together, the old and the young,
The fighter deadly to smite and the prater cunning of tongue,

The woman wedded and fruitful, inured to the pangs of birth,
And the maid that knew not of kisses, blindly sprawled on the earth.
From the hall Hiopa the king and his chiefs came stealthily forth.
Already the sun hung low and enlightened the peaks of the north;
But the wind was stubborn to die and blew as it blows at morn,
Showering the nuts in the dusk, and e'en as a banner is torn,
High on the peaks of the island, shattered the mountain cloud.
And now at once, at a signal, a silent, emulous crowd
Set hands to the work of death, hurrying to and fro,
Like ants, to furnish the fagots, building them broad and low,
And piling them high and higher around the walls of the hall.
Silence persisted within, for sleep lay heavy on all;
But the mother of Támatéa stood at Hiopa's side,
And shook for terror and joy like a girl that is a bride.
Night fell on the toilers, and first Hiopa the wise
Made the round of the house, visiting all with his eyes;
And all was piled to the eaves, and fuel blockaded the door;
And within, in the house beleagured, slumbered the forty score.
Then was an aito dispatched and came with fire in his hand,
And Hiopa took it.—"Within," said he, "is the life of a land;
And behold! I breathe on the coal, I breathe on the dales of the east,
And silence falls on forest and shore; the voice of the feast
Is quenched, and the smoke of cooking; the rooftree decays and falls
On the empty lodge, and the winds subvert deserted walls."

Therewithal, to the fuel, he laid the glowing coal;
And the redness ran in the mass and burrowed within like a mole,
And copious smoke was conceived. But, as when a dam is to burst,
The water lips it and crosses in silver trickles at first,
And then, of a sudden, whelms and bears it away forthright:
So now, in a moment, the flames sprang and towered in the night,
And wrestled and roared in the wind, and high over house and tree,
Stood, like a streaming torch, enlightening land and sea.

But the mother of Támatéa threw her arms abroad,
"Pyre of my son," she shouted, "debited vengeance of God,
Late, late, I behold you, yet I behold you at last,
And glory, beholding! For now are the days of my agony past,
The lust that famished my soul now eats and drinks its desire,
And they that encompassed my son shrivel alive in the fire.
Tenfold precious the vengeance that comes after lingering years!
Ye quenched the voice of my singer?—hark, in your dying ears,
The song of the conflagration! Ye left me a widow alone?
—Behold, the whole of your race consumes, sinew and bone
And torturing flesh together: man, mother, and maid
Heaped in a common shambles; and already, borne by the trade,
The smoke of your dissolution darkens the stars of night."

Thus she spoke, and her stature grew in the people's sight.

III

RAHÉRO

Rahéro was there in the hall asleep: beside him his wife,
Comely, a mirthful woman, one that delighted in life;
And a girl that was ripe for marriage, shy and sly as a mouse;
And a boy, a climber of trees; all the hopes of his house.
Unwary, with open hands, he slept in the midst of his folk,
And dreamed that he heard a voice crying without, and awoke,
Leaping blindly afoot like one from a dream that he fears.
A hellish glow and clouds were about him;—it roared in his ears
Like the sound of the cataract fall that plunges sudden and steep;
And Rahéro swayed as he stood, and his reason was still asleep.
Now the flame struck hard on the house, wind-wielded, a fracturing blow,
And the end of the roof was burst and fell on the sleepers below;
And the lofty hall, and the feast, and the prostrate bodies of folk,
Shone red in his eyes a moment, and then were swallowed of smoke.
In the mind of Rahéro clearness came; and he opened his throat;
And as when a squall comes sudden, the straining sail of a boat
Thunders aloud and bursts, so thundered the voice of the man.
—"The wind and the rain!" he shouted, the mustering word of the clan,
And "up!" and "to arms, men of Vaiau!" But silence replied,
Or only the voice of the gusts of the fire, and nothing beside.

Rahéro stooped and groped. He handled his womankind,
But the fumes of the fire and the kava had quenched the life of their mind,
And they lay like pillars prone; and his hand encountered the boy,
And there sprang in the gloom of his soul a sudden lightning of joy.
"Him can I save!" he thought, "if I were speedy enough."
And he loosened the cloth from his loins, and swaddled the child in the stuff;
And about the strength of his neck he knotted the burden well.

There where the roof had fallen, it roared like the mouth of hell.
Thither Rahéro went, stumbling on senseless folk,
And grappled a post of the house, and began to climb in the smoke:
The last alive of Vaiau; and the son borne by the sire.
The post glowed in the grain with ulcers of eating fire,
And the fire bit to the blood and mangled his hands and thighs;
And the fumes sang in his head like wine and stung in his eyes;
And still he climbed, and came to the top, the place of proof,
And thrust a hand through the flame, and clambered alive on the roof.
But even as he did so, the wind, in a garment of flames and pain,
Wrapped him from head to heel; and the waistcloth parted in twain;
And the living fruit of his loins dropped in the fire below.
About the blazing feast-house clustered the eyes of the foe,
Watching, hand upon weapon, lest ever a soul should flee,
Shading the brow from the glare, straining the neck to see.
Only, to leeward, the flames in the wind swept far and wide,

And the forest sputtered on fire; and there might no man
abide.
Thither Rahéro crept, and dropped from the burning
eaves,
And crouching low to the ground, in a treble covert of
leaves
And fire and volleying smoke, ran for the life of his soul
Unseen; and behind him under a furnace of ardent coal,
Cairned with a wonder of flame, and blotting the night
with smoke,
Blazed and were smelted together the bones of all his folk.

He fled unguided at first; but hearing the breakers
roar,
Thitherward shaped his way, and came at length to the
shore.
Sound-limbed he was: dry-eyed; but smarted in every
part;
And the mighty cage of his ribs heaved on his straining
heart
With sorrow and rage. And "Fools!" he cried, "fools of
Vaiau,
Heads of swine—gluttons—Alas! and where are they
now?
Those that I played with, those that nursed me, those that
I nursed?
God, and I outliving them! I, the least and the worst—
I, that thought myself crafty, snared by this herd of
swine,
In the tortures of hell and desolate, stripped of all that
was mine:
All!—my friends and my fathers—the silver heads of
yore
That trooped to the council, the children that ran to the
open door
Crying with innocent voices and clasping a father's
knees!
And mine, my wife—my daughter—my sturdy climber of
trees,
Ah, never to climb again!"

Thus in the dusk of the night,
(For clouds rolled in the sky and the moon was swallowed from sight,)
Pacing and gnawing his fists, Rahéro raged by the shore.
Vengeance: that must be his. But much was to do before;
And first a single life to be snatched from a deadly place,
A life, the root of revenge, surviving plant of the race:
And next the race to be raised anew, and the lands of the clan
Repeopled. So Rahéro designed, a prudent man
Even in wrath, and turned for the means of revenge and escape:
A boat to be seized by stealth, a wife to be taken by rape.

Still was the dark lagoon; beyond on the coral wall,
He saw the breakers shine, he heard them bellow and fall.
Alone, on the top of the reef, a man with a flaming brand
Walked, gazing and pausing, a fish-spear poised in his hand.
The foam boiled to his calf when the mightier breakers came,
And the torch shed in the wind scattering tufts of flame.
Afar on the dark lagoon a canoe lay idly at wait:
A figure dimly guiding it: surely the fisherman's mate.
Rahéro saw and smiled. He straightened his mighty thews:
Naked, with never a weapon, and covered with scorch and bruise,
He straightened his arms, he filled the void of his body with breath,
And, strong as the wind in his manhood. doomed the fisher to death.

Silent he entered the water, and silently swam, and came
There where the fisher walked, holding on high the flame.
Loud on the pier of the reef volleyed the breach of the sea;
And hard at the back of the man, Rahéro crept to his knee

On the coral, and suddenly sprang and seized him, the elder hand
Clutching the joint of his throat, the other snatching the brand
Ere it had time to fall, and holding it steady and high.
Strong was the fisher, brave and swift of mind and of eye—
Strongly he threw in the clutch; but Rahéro resisted the strain,
And jerked, and the spine of life snapped with a crack in twain,
And the man came slack in his hands and tumbled a lump at his feet.

One moment: and there, on the reef, where the breakers whitened and beat,
Rahéro was standing alone, glowing and scorched and bare,
A victor unknown of any, raising the torch in the air.
But once he drank of his breath and instantly set him to fish
Like a man intent upon supper at home and a savoury dish.
For what should the woman have seen? A man with a torch—and then
A moment's blur of the eyes—and a man with a torch again.
And the torch had scarcely been shaken. "Ah, surely," Rahéro said,
"She will deem it a trick of the eyes, a fancy born in the head;
But time must be given the fool to nourish a fool's belief."
So for a while, a sedulous fisher, he walked the reef,
Pausing at times and gazing, striking at times with the spear:
—Lastly, uttered the call; and even as the boat drew near,
Like a man that was done with its use, tossed the torch in the sea.

Lightly he leaped on the boat beside the woman; and she
Lightly addressed him, and yielded the paddle and place to sit;

For now the torch was extinguished the night was black as the pit.
Rahéro set him to row, never a word he spoke,
And the boat sang in the water urged by his vigorous stroke.
—"What ails you?" the woman asked, "and why did you drop the brand?
We have only to kindle another as soon as we come to land."
Never a word Rahéro replied, but urged the canoe.
And a chill fell on the women.—"Atta! speak! is it you?
Speak! Why are you silent? Why do you bend aside?
Wherefore steer to the seaward?" thus she panted and cried.
Never a word from the oarsman, toiling there in the dark;
But right for a gate of the reef he silently headed the bark,
And wielding the single paddle with passionate sweep on sweep,
Drove her, the little fitted, forth on the open deep.
And fear, there where she sat, froze the woman to stone:
Not fear of the crazy boat and the weltering deep alone;
But a keener fear of the night, the dark, and the ghostly hour,
And the thing that drove the canoe with more than a mortal's power
And more than a mortal's boldness. For much she knew of the dead
That haunt and fish upon reefs, toiling, like men, for bread,
And traffic with human fishers, or slay them and take their ware,
Till the hour when the star of the dead goes down, and the morning air
Blows, and the cocks are singing on shore. And surely she knew.
The speechless thing at her side belonged to the grave.

It blew
All night from the south; all night, Rahéro contended and kept

The prow to the cresting sea; and, silent, as though she slept,
The woman huddled and quaked. And now was the peek of day.
High and long on their left the mountainous island lay;
And over the peaks of Taiárapu arrows of sunlight struck.
On shore the birds were beginning to sing: the ghostly ruck
Of the buried had long ago returned to the covered grave;
And here on the sea, the woman, waxing suddenly brave,
Turned her swiftly about and looked in the face of the man.
And sure he was none that she knew, none of her country or clan:
A stranger, mother-naked, and marred with the marks of fire,
But comely and great of stature, a man to obey and admire.

And Rahéro regarded her also, fixed, with a frowning face,
Judging the woman's fitness to mother a warlike race.
Broad of shoulder, ample of girdle, long in the thigh,
Deep of bosom she was, and bravely supported his eye.

"Woman," said he, "last night the men of your folk—
Man, woman, and maid, smothered my race in smoke.
It was done like cowards: and I, a mighty man of my hands,
Escaped, a single life; and now to the empty lands
And smokeless hearths of my people, sail, with yourself, alone.
Before your mother was born, the die of to-day was thrown
And you selected:—your husband, vainly striving, to fall
Broken between these hands:—yourself to be severed from all,
The places, the people, you love—home, kindred, and clan—
And to dwell in a desert and bear the babes of a kinless man."

THE FEAST OF FAMINE

I

THE PRIEST'S VIGIL

IN all the land of the tribe was neither fish nor fruit,
And the deepest pit of popoi stood empty to the foot.
The clans upon the left and the clans upon the right
Now oiled their carven maces and scoured their daggers bright;
They gat them to the thicket, to the deepest of the shade,
And lay with sleepless eyes in the deadly ambuscade.
And oft in the starry even the song of morning rose,
What time the oven smoked in the country of their foes;
For oft to loving hearts, and waiting ears and sight,
The lads that went to forage returned not with the night.
Now first the children sickened, and then the women paled,
And the great arms of the warrior no more for war availed.
Hushed was the deep drum, discarded was the dance;
And those that met the priest now glanced at him askance.
The priest was a man of years, his eyes were ruby-red,
He neither feared the dark nor the terrors of the dead,
He knew the songs of races, the names of ancient date;
And the beard upon his bosom would have bought the chief's estate.
He dwelt in a high-built lodge, hard by the roaring shore,
Raised on a noble terrace and with tikis at the door.
Within it was full of riches, for he served his nation well,
And full of the sound of breakers, like the hollow of a shell.
For weeks he let them perish, gave never a helping sign,
But sat on his oiled platform to commune with the divine,
But sat on his high terrace, with the tikis by his side,

And stared on the blue ocean, like a parrot, ruby-eyed.
Dawn as yellow as sulphur leaped on the mountain height;
Out on the round of the sea the gems of the morning light,
Up from the round of the sea the streamers of the sun;—
But down in the depths of the valley the day was not begun.
In the blue of the woody twilight burned red the cocoa-husk,
And the women and men of the clan went forth to bathe in the dusk,
A word that began to go round, a word, a whisper, a start:
Hope that leaped in the bosom, fear that knocked on the heart:
"See, the priest is not risen—look, for his door is fast!
He is going to name the victims; he is going to help us at last."

Thrice rose the sun to noon; and ever, like one of the dead,
The priest lay still in his house with the roar of the sea in his head;
There was never a foot on the floor, there was never a whisper of speech;
Only the leering tikis stared on the blinding beach.
Again were the mountains fired, again the morning broke;
And all the houses lay still, but the house of the priest awoke.
Close in their covering roofs lay and trembled the clan,
But the agèd, red-eyed priest ran forth like a lunatic man;
And the village panted to see him in the jewels of death again,
In the silver beards of the old and the hair of women slain.
Frenzy shook in his limbs, frenzy shone in his eyes,
And still and again as he ran, the valley rang with his cries.
All day long in the land, by cliff and thicket and den,
He ran his lunatic rounds, and howled for the flesh of men;
All day long he ate not, nor ever drank of the brook;

And all day long in their houses the people listened and shook—
All day long in their houses they listened with bated breath,
And never a soul went forth, for the sight of the priest was death.

Three were the days of his running, as the gods appointed of yore,
Two the nights of his sleeping alone in the place of gore:
The drunken slumber of frenzy twice he drank to the lees,
On the sacred stones of the High-place under the sacred trees;
With a lamp at his ashen head he lay in the place of the feast,
And the sacred leaves of the banyan rustled around the priest.
Last, when the stated even fell upon terrace and tree,
And the shade of the lofty island lay leagues away to sea,
And all the valleys of verdure were heavy with manna and musk,
The wreck of the red-eyed priest came gasping home in the dusk.
He reeled across the village, he staggered along the shore,
And between the leering tikis crept groping through his door.

There went a stir through the lodges, the voice of speech awoke;
Once more from the builded platforms arose the evening smoke.
And those who were mighty in war, and those renowned for an art
Sat in their stated seats and talked of the morrow apart.

II

THE LOVERS

HARK! away in the woods—for the ears of love are sharp—
Stealthily, quietly touched, the note of the one-stringed harp.
In the lighted house of her father, why should Taheia start?
Taheia heavy of hair, Taheia tender of heart,
Taheia the well-descended, a bountiful dealer in love,
Nimble of foot like the deer, and kind of eye like the dove?
Sly and shy as a cat, with never a change of face,
Taheia slips to the door, like one that would breathe a space;
Saunters and pauses, and looks at the stars, and lists to the seas;
Then sudden and swift as a cat, she plunges under the trees.
Swift as a cat she runs, with her garment gathered high,
Leaping, nimble of foot, running, certain of eye;
And ever to guide her way over the smooth and the sharp,
Ever nearer and nearer the note of the one-stringed harp;
Till at length, in a glade of the wood, with a naked mountain above,
The sound of the harp thrown down, and she in the arms of her love.
"Rua,"—"Taheia," they cry—"my heart, my soul, and my eyes,"
And clasp and sunder and kiss, with lovely laughter and sighs,
"Rua!"—"Taheia, my love,"—"Rua, star of my night,
Clasp me, hold me, and love me, single spring of delight."

And Rua folded her close, he folded her near and long,
The living knit to the living, and sang the lover's song:

Night, night it is, night upon the palms.
Night, night it is, the land wind has blown.
Starry, starry night, over deep and height;
Love, love in the valley, love all alone.

"Taheia, heavy of hair, a foolish thing have we done,
To bind what gods have sundered unkindly into one.
Why should a lowly lover have touched Taheia's skirt,
Taheia the well-descended, and Rua child of the dirt?"

"—On high with the haka-ikis my father sits in state,
Ten times fifty kinsmen salute him in the gate;
Round all his martial body, and in bands across his face,
The marks of the tattooer proclaim his lofty place.
I too, in the hands of the cunning, in the sacred cabin of palm,
Have shrunk like the mimosa, and bleated like the lamb;
Round half my tender body, that none shall clasp but you,
For a crest and a fair adornment go dainty lines of blue.
Love, love, beloved Rua, love levels all degrees,
And the well-tattooed Taheia clings panting to your knees."

"—Taheia, song of the morning, how long is the longest love?
A cry, a clasp of the hands, a star that falls from above!
Ever at morn in the blue, and at night when all is black,
Ever it skulks and trembles with the hunter, Death, on its track.
Hear me, Taheia, death! For to-morrow the priest shall awake,
And the names be named of the victims to bleed for the nation's sake;
And first of the numbered many that shall be slain ere noon,
Rua the child of the dirt, Rua the kinless loon.
For him shall the drum be beat, for him be raised the song,
For him to the sacred High-place the chaunting people throng,
For him the oven smoke as for a speechless beast,
And the sire of my Taheia come greedy to the feast."

"Rua, be silent, spare me. Taheia closes her ears.
Pity my yearning heart, pity my girlish years!
Flee from the cruel hands, flee from the knife and coal,
Lie hid in the deeps of the woods, Rua, sire of my soul!"

"Whither to flee, Taheia, whither in all of the land?
The fires of the bloody kitchen are kindled on every hand;
On every hand in the isle a hungry whetting of teeth,
Eyes in the trees above, arms in the brush beneath.
Patience to lie in wait, cunning to follow the sleuth,
Abroad the foes I have fought, and at home the friends of my youth."

"Love, love, beloved Rua, love has a clearer eye,
Hence from the arms of love you go not forth to die.
There, where the broken mountain drops sheer into the glen.
There shall you find a hold from the boldest hunter of men;
There, in the deep recess, where the sun falls only at noon,
And only once in the night enters the light of the moon,
Nor ever a sound but of birds, or the rain when it falls with a shout;
For death and the fear of death beleaguer the valley about.
Tapu it is, but the gods will surely pardon despair;
Tapu, but what of that? If Rua can only dare.
Tapu and tapu and tapu, I know they are every one right;
But the god of every tapu is not always quick to smite.
Lie secret there, my Rua, in the arms of awful gods,
Sleep in the shade of the trees on the couch of the kindly sods.
Sleep and dream of Taheia, Taheia will wake for you;
And whenever the land wind blows and the woods are heavy with dew,
Alone through the horror of night, with food for the soul of her love,
Taheia the undissuaded will hurry true as the dove."

"Taheia, the pit of the night crawls with treacherous things,
Spirits of ultimate air and the evil souls of things;

The souls of the dead, the stranglers, that perch in the trees of the wood,
Waiters for all things human, haters of evil and good."
"Rua, behold me, kiss me, look in my eyes and read;
Are these the eyes of a maid that would leave her lover in need?
Brave in the eye of the day, my father ruled in the fight;
The child of his loins, Taheia, will play the man in the night."

So it was spoken, and so agreed, and Taheia arose
And smiled in the stars and was gone, swift as the swallow goes;
And Rua stood on the hill, and sighed, and followed her flight,
And there were lodges below, each with its door alight;
From folk that sat on the terrace and drew out the even long
Sudden crowings of laughter, monotonous drone of song;
The quiet passage of souls over his head in the trees;
And from all around the haven the crumbling thunder of seas.
"Farewell, my home," said Rua. "Farewell, O quiet seat!
To-morrow in all your valleys the drum of death shall beat."

III

THE FEAST

Dawn as yellow as sulphur leaped on the naked peak,
And all the village was stirring, for now was the priest to speak,
Forth on his terrace he came, and sat with the chief in talk;
His lips were blackened with fever, his cheeks were whiter than chalk;
Fever clutched at his hands, fever nodded his head,
But, quiet and steady and cruel, his eyes shone ruby-red.
In the earliest rays of the sun the chief rose up content;

Braves were summoned, and drummers; messengers came
and went;
Braves ran to their lodges, weapons were snatched from
the wall;
The commons herded together, and fear was over them all.
Festival dresses they wore, but the tongue was dry in their
mouth,
And the blinking eyes in their faces skirted from north to
south.

Now to the sacred enclosure gathered the greatest and
least,
And from under the shade of the banyan arose the voice of
the feast,
The frenzied roll of the drum, and a swift, monotonous
song.
Higher the sun swam up; the trade wind level and
strong
Awoke in the tops of the palms and rattled the fans
aloud,
And over the garlanded heads and shining robes of the
crowd
Tossed the spiders of shadow, scattered the jewels of sun.
Forty the tale of the drums, and the forty throbbed like
one;
A thousand hearts in the crowd, and the even chorus of
song,
Swift as the feet of a runner, trampled a thousand strong.

And the old men leered at the ovens and licked their lips
for the food;
And the women stared at the lads, and laughed and looked
to the wood.
As when the sweltering baker, at night, when the city is
dead,
Alone in the trough of labour treads and fashions the
bread;
So in the heat, and the reek, and the touch of woman and
man,
The naked spirit of evil kneaded the hearts of the clan.

Now cold was at many a heart, and shaking in many a seat;
For there were the empty baskets, but who was to furnish the meat?
For here was the nation assembled, and there were the ovens anigh,
And out of a thousand singers nine were numbered to die.
Till, of a sudden, a shock, a mace in the air, a yell,
And, struck in the edge of the crowd, the first of the victims fell.
Terror and horrible glee divided the shrinking clan,
Terror of what was to follow, glee for a diet of man.
Frenzy hurried the chaunt, frenzy rattled the drums;
The nobles, high on the terrace, greedily mouthed their thumbs;
And once and again and again, in the ignorant crowd below,
Once and again and again descended the murderous blow.
Now smoked the oven, and now, with the cutting lip of a shell,
A butcher of ninety winters jointed the bodies well.
Unto the carven lodge, silent, in order due,
The grandees of the nation one after one withdrew;
And a line of laden bearers brought to the terrace foot,
On poles across their shoulders, the last reserve of fruit.
The victims bled for the nobles in the old appointed way;
The fruit was spread for the commons, for all should eat to-day.
And now was the kava brewed, and now the cocoa ran,
Now was the hour of the dance for child and woman and man;
And mirth was in every heart, and a garland on every head,
And all was well with the living and well with the eight who were dead.
Only the chiefs and the priest talked and consulted awhile:
"To-morrow," they said, and "To-morrow," and nodded and seemed to smile:
"Rua the child of dirt, the creature of common clay,
Rua must die to-morrow, since Rua is gone to-day."

Out of the groves of the valley, where clear the blackbirds sang,
Sheer from the trees of the valley the face of the mountain sprang;
Sheer and bare it rose, unscalable barricade,
Beaten and blown against by the generous draught of the trade.
Dawn on its fluted brow painted rainbow light,
Close on its pinnacled crown trembled the stars at night.
Here and there in a cleft clustered contorted trees,
Or the silver beard of a stream hung and swung in the breeze.
High overhead, with a cry, the torrents leaped for the main,
And silently sprinkled below in thin perennial rain.
Dark in the staring noon; dark was Rua's ravine,
Damp and cold was the air, and the face of the cliffs was green.
Here, in the rocky pit, accursed already of old,
On a stone in the midst of a river, Rua sat and was cold.

"Valley of mid-day shadows, valley of silent falls,"
Rua sang, and his voice went hollow about the walls,
"Valley of shadow and rock, a doleful prison to me.
What is the life you can give to a child of the sun and the sea?"
And Rua arose and came to the open mouth of the glen,
Whence he beheld the woods, and the sea, and the houses of men.
Wide blew the riotous trade, and smelt in his nostrils good;
It bowed the boats on the bay, and tore and divided the wood;
It smote and sundered the groves as Moses smote with the rod;
And the streamers of all the trees blew like banners abroad:
And ever and on, in a lull, the trade wind brought him along
A far-off patter of drums and a far-off whisper of song.

Swift as the swallow's wings, the diligent hands on the drum
Fluttered and hurried and throbbed. "Ah, woe that I hear you come,"
Rua cried in his grief, "a sorrowful sound to me,
Mounting far and faint from the resonant shore of the sea!
Woe in the song! for the grave breathes in the singers' breath,
And I hear in the tramp of the drums the beat of the heart of death.
Home of my youth! no more, through all the length of the years,
No more to the place of the echoes of early laughter and tears,
No more shall Rua return; no more as the evening ends,
To crowded eyes of welcome, to the reaching hands of friends."

All day long from the High-place the drums and the singing came,
And the even fell, and the sun went down, a wheel of flame;
And night came gleaning the shadows and hushing the sounds of the wood;
And silence slept on all, where Rua sorrowed and stood.
But still from the shore of the bay the sound of the festival rang,
And still the crowd in the High-place danced and shouted and sang.

Now over all the isle terror was breathed abroad
Of shadowy hands from the trees and shadowy snares in the sod;
And before the nostrils of night, the shuddering hunter of men
Hurried, with beard on shoulder, back to his lighted den.
"Taheia, here to my side!"—"Rua, my Rua, you!"
And cold from the clutch of terror, cold with the damp of the dew,
Taheia, heavy of hair, leaped through the dark to his arms;
Taheia leaped to his clasp, and was folded in from alarms.

"Rua, beloved, here, see what your love has brought;
Coming—alas! returning—swift as the shuttle of thought;
Returning, alas! for to-night, with the beaten drum and
the voice,
In the shine of many torches must the sleepless clan rejoice;
And Taheia the well-descended, the daughter of chief and
priest,
Taheia must sit in her place in the crowded bench of the
feast."
So it was spoken; and she, girding her garment high,
Fled and was swallowed of woods, swift as the sight of an
eye.

Night over isle and sea rolled her curtain of stars,
Then a trouble awoke in the air, the east was banded with
bars;
Dawn as yellow as sulphur leaped on the mountain height;
Dawn, in the deepest glen, fell a wonder of light;
High and clear stood the palms in the eye of the brighten-
ing east,
And lo! from the sides of the sea the broken sound of the
feast!
As, when in days of summer, through open windows, the
fly
Swift as a breeze and loud as a trump goes by,
But when frosts in the field have pinched the wintering
mouse,
Blindly noses and buzzes and hums in the firelit house:
So the sound of the feast gallantly trampled at night,
So it staggered and drooped, and droned in the morning
light.

IV

THE RAID

It chanced that as Rua sat in the valley of silent falls,
He heard a calling of doves from high on the cliffy walls.
Fire had fashioned of yore, and time had broken the rocks;
There were rooting crannies for trees and nesting-places
for flocks;

And he saw on the top of the cliffs, looking up from the pit of the shade,
A flicker of wings and sunshine, and trees that swung in the trade.
"The trees swing in the trade," quoth Rua, doubtful of words,
"And the sun stares from the sky, but what should trouble the birds?"
Up from the shade he gazed, where high the parapet shone,
And he was aware of a ledge and of things that moved thereon.
"What manner of things are these? Are they spirits abroad by day?
Or the foes of my clan that are come, bringing death by a perilous way?"

The valley was gouged like a vessel, and round like the vessel's lip,
With a cape of the side of the hill thrust forth like the bows of a ship.
On the top of the face of the cape a volley of sun struck fair,
And the cape overhung like a chin a gulph of sunless air.
"Silence, heart! What is that?—that, that flickered and shone,
Into the sun for an instant, and in an instant gone?
Was it a warrior's plume, a warrior's girdle of hair?
Swung in the loop of a rope, is he making a bridge of the air?"

Once and again Rua saw, in the trenchant edge of the sky,
The giddy conjuring done. And then, in the blink of an eye,
A scream caught in with the breath, a whirling packet of limbs,
A lump that dived in the gulph, more swift than a dolphin swims;
And there was the lump at his feet, and eyes were alive in the lump.
Sick was the soul of Rua, ambushed close in a clump;

Sick of soul he drew near, making his courage stout;
And he looked in the face of the thing, and the life of the thing went out.
And he gazed on the tattooed limbs, and, behold, he knew the man:
Hoka, a chief of the Vais, the truculent foe of his clan:
Hoka a moment since that stepped in the loop of the rope,
Filled with the lust of war, and alive with courage and hope.

Again to the giddy cornice Rua lifted his eyes
And again beheld men passing in the armpit of the skies.
"Foes of my race!" cried Rua, "the mouth of Rua is true:
Never a shark in the deep is nobler of soul than you.
There was never a nobler foray, never a bolder plan;
Never a dizzier path was trod by the children of man;
And Rua, your evil-dealer through all the days of his years,
"Counts it honour to hate you, honour to fall by your spears."

And Rua straightened his back. "O Vais, a scheme for a scheme!"
Cried Rua and turned and descended the turbulent stair of the stream,
Leaping from rock to rock as the water-wagtail at home
Flits through resonant valleys and skims by boulder and foam.
And Rua burst from the glen and leaped on the shore of the brook,
And straight for the roofs of the clan his vigorous way he took.
Swift were the heels of his flight, and loud behind as he went
Rattled the leaping stones on the line of his long descent.
And ever he thought as he ran, and caught at his gasping breath,
"O the fool of a Rua, Rua that runs to his death!
But the right is the right," thought Rua, and ran like the wind on the foam,
"The right is the right for ever, and home for ever home.

For what though the oven smoke? And what though I die
ere morn?
There was I nourished and tended, and there was Taheia
born."
Noon was high on the High-place, the second noon of the
feast;
And heat and shameful slumber weighed on people and
priest;
And the heart drudged slow in bodies heavy with mon-
strous meals;
And the senseless limbs were scattered abroad like spokes
of wheels;
And crapulous women sat and stared at the stones anigh
With a bestial droop of the lip and a swinish rheum in the
eye.
As about the dome of the bees in the time for the drones to
fall,
The dead and the maimed are scattered, and lie, and
stagger, and crawl;
So on the grades of the terrace, in the ardent eye of the
day,
The half-awake and the sleepers clustered and crawled and
lay;
And loud as the drone of the bees, in the time of a swarm-
ing horde,
A horror of many insects hung in the air and roared.
Rua looked and wondered; he said to himself in his heart:
"Poor are the pleasures of life, and death is the better
part."
But lo! on the higher benches a cluster of tranquil folk
Sat by themselves, nor raised their serious eyes, nor spoke:
Women with robes unruffled and garlands duly arranged,
Gazing far from the feast with faces of people estranged;
And quiet amongst the quiet, and fairer than all the fair,
Taheia, the well-descended, Taheia, heavy of hair.
And the soul of Rua awoke, courage enlightened his
eyes,
And he uttered a summoning shout and called on the clan
to rise.
Over against him at once, in the spotted shade of the trees,

Owlish and blinking creatures scrambled to hands and knees;
On the grades of the sacred terrace, the driveller woke to fear,
And the hand of the ham-drooped warrior brandished a wavering spear.
And Rua folded his arms, and scorn discovered his teeth;
Above the war-crowd gibbered, and Rua stood smiling beneath.
Thick, like leaves in the autumn, faint, like April sleet,
Missiles from tremulous hands quivered around his feet;
And Taheia leaped from her place; and the priest, the ruby-eyed,
Ran to the front of the terrace, and brandished his arms, and cried:
"Hold, O fools, he brings tidings!" and "Hold, 'tis the love of my heart!"
Till lo! in front of the terrace, Rua pierced with a dart.

Taheia cherished his head, and the aged priest stood by,
And gazed with eyes of ruby at Rua's darkening eye.
"Taheia, here is the end, I die a death for a man.
I have given the life of my soul to save an unsavable clan.
See them, the drooping of hams; behold the blinking crew:
Fifty spears they cast, and one of fifty true!
And you, O priest, the foreteller, foretell for yourself if you can,
Foretell the hour of the day when the Vais shall burst on your clan!
By the head of the tapu cleft, with death and fire in their hand,
Thick and silent like ants, the warriors swarm in the land."

And they tell that when next the sun had climbed to the noonday skies,
It shone on the smoke of feasting in the country of the Vais.

TICONDEROGA

THIS is the tale of the man
Who heard a word in the night
In the land of the heathery hills,
In the days of the feud and the fight.
By the sides of the rainy sea,
Where never a stranger came,
On the awful lips of the dead,
He heard the outlandish name.
It sang in his sleeping ears,
It hummed in his waking head:
The name—Ticonderoga,
The utterance of the dead.

I

THE SAYING OF THE NAME

On the loch-sides of Appin,
When the mist blew from the sea,
A Stewart stood with a Cameron:
An angry man was he.
The blood beat in his ears,
The blood ran hot to his head,
The mist blew from the sea,
And there was the Cameron dead.
"O, what have I done to my friend,
O, what have I done to mysel',
That he should be cold and dead,
And I in the danger of all?

Nothing but danger about me,
Danger behind and before,
Death at wait in the heather
In Appin and Mamore,

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Hate at all of the ferries
  And death at each of the fords,
Camerons priming gunlocks
  And Camerons sharpening swords."

But this was a man of counsel,
  This was a man of a score,
There dwelt no pawkier Stewart
  In Appin or Mamore.
He looked on the blowing mist,
  He looked on the awful dead,
And there came a smile on his face
  And there slipped a thought in his head.

Out over cairn and moss,
  Out over scrog and scaur,
He ran as runs the clansman
  That bears the cross of war.
His heart beat in his body,
  His hair clove to his face,
When he came at last in the gloaming
  To the dead man's brother's place.
The east was white with the moon,
  The west with the sun was red,
And there, in the house-doorway,
  Stood the brother of the dead.

"I have slain a man to my danger,
  I have slain a man to my death.
I put my soul in your hands,"
  The panting Stewart saith.
"I lay it bare in your hands,
  For I know your hands are leal;
And be you my targe and bulwark
  From the bullet and the steel."

Then up and spoke the Cameron,
  And gave him his hand again:
"There shall never a man in Scotland
  Set faith in me in vain;

And whatever man you have slaughtered,
Of whatever name or line,
By my sword and yonder mountain,
I make your quarrel mine.
I bid you in to my fireside,
I share with you house and hall;
It stands upon my honour
To see you safe from all."

It fell in the time of midnight,
When the fox barked in the den
And the plaids were over the faces
In all the houses of men,
That as the living Cameron
Lay sleepless on his bed,
Out of the night and the other world,
Came in to him the dead.

"My blood is on the heather,
My bones are on the hill;
There is joy in the home of ravens
That the young shall eat their fill.
My blood is poured in the dust,
My soul is spilled in the air;
And the man that has undone me
Sleeps in my brother's care."

"I'm wae for your death, my brother,
But if all of my house were dead,
I couldnae withdraw the plighted hand,
Nor break the word once said."

"O, what shall I say to our father,
In the place to which I fare?
O, what shall I say to our mother,
Who greets to see me there?
And to all the kindly Camerons
That have lived and died long-syne—
Is this the word you send them,
Fause-hearted brother mine?"

"It's neither fear nor duty,
It's neither quick nor dead
Shall gar me withdraw the plighted hand,
Or break the word once said."

Thrice in the time of midnight,
When the fox barked in the den,
And the plaids were over the faces
In all the houses of men,
Thrice as the living Cameron
Lay sleepless on his bed,
Out of the night and the other world
Came in to him the dead,
And cried to him for vengeance
On the man that laid him low;
And thrice the living Cameron
Told the dead Cameron, no.

"Thrice have you seen me, brother,
But now shall see me no more,
Till you meet your angry fathers
Upon the farther shore.
Thrice have I spoken, and now,
Before the cock be heard,
I take my leave for ever
With the naming of a word.
It shall sing in your sleeping ears,
It shall hum in your waking head,
The name—Ticonderoga,
And the warning of the dead."

Now when the night was over
And the time of people's fears,
The Cameron walked abroad,
And the word was in his ears.
"Many a name I know,
But never a name like this;
O, where shall I find a skilly man
Shall tell me what it is?"

With many a man he counselled
  Of high and low degree,
With the herdsmen on the mountains
  And the fishers of the sea.
And he came and went unweary,
  And read the books of yore,
And the runes that were written of old
  On the stones upon the moor.

And many a name he was told,
  But never the name of his fears—
Never, in east or west,
  The name that rang in his ears:
Names of men and of clans;
  Names for the grass and the tree,
For the smallest tarn in the mountains,
  The smallest reef in the sea:
Names for the high and low,
  The names of the craig and the flat;
But in all the land of Scotland,
  Never a name like that.

II

THE SEEKING OF THE NAME

And now there was speech in the south,
  And a man of the south that was wise,
A periwig'd lord of London,
  Called on the clans to rise.
And the riders rode, and the summons
  Came to the western shore,
To the land of the sea and the heather,
  To Appin and Mamore.
It called on all to gather
  From every scrog and scaur,
That loved their fathers' tartan
  And the ancient game of war.
And down the watery valley
  And up the windy hill,

Once more, as in the olden,
The pipes were sounding shrill;
Again in highland sunshine
The naked steel was bright;
And the lads, once more in tartan,
Went forth again to fight.

"O, why should I dwell here
With a weird upon my life,
When the clansmen shout for battle
And the war-swords clash in strife?
I cannae joy at feast,
I cannae sleep in bed,
For the wonder of the word
And the warning of the dead.
It sings in my sleeping ears
It hums in my waking head,
The name—Ticonderoga,
The utterance of the dead.
Then up, and with the fighting men
To march away from here,
Till the cry of the great war-pipe
Shall drown it in my ear!"

Where flew King George's ensign
The plaided soldiers went:
They drew the sword in Germany,
In Flanders pitched the tent.
The bells of foreign cities
Rang far across the plain:
They passed the happy Rhine,
They drank the rapid Main.
Through Asiatic jungles
The Tartans filed their way,
And the neighing of the war-pipes
Struck terror in Cathay.
"Many a name have I heard," he thought.
"In all the tongues of men,
Full many a name both here and there,
Full many both now and then.

When I was at home in my father's house
  In the land of the naked knee,
Between the eagles that fly in the lift
  And the herrings that swim in the sea,
And now that I am a captain-man
  With a braw cockade in my hat—
Many a name have I heard," he thought,
  "But never a name like that."

III

THE PLACE OF THE NAME

THERE fell a war in a woody place,
  Lay far across the sea,
A war of the march in the mirk midnight
  And the shot from behind the tree,
The shaven head and the painted face,
  The silent foot in the wood,
In a land of a strange, outlandish tongue
  That was hard to be understood.

It fell about the gloaming
  The general stood with his staff,
He stood and he looked east and west
  With little mind to laugh.
"Far have I been and much have I seen,
  And kent both gain and loss,
But here we have woods on every hand
  And a kittle water to cross.
Far have I been and much have I seen,
  But never the beat of this;
And there's one must go down to that waterside
  To see how deep it is."

It fell in the dusk of the night
  When unco things betide,
The skilly captain, the Cameron,
  Went down to that waterside.

Canny and soft the captain went;
And a man of the woody land,
With the shaven head and the painted face,
Went down at his right hand.
It fell in the quiet night,
There was never a sound to ken;
But all of the woods to the right and left
Lay filled with the painted men.

"Far have I been and much have I seen,
Both as a man and boy,
But never have I set forth a foot
On so perilous an employ."
It fell in the dusk of the night
When unco things betide,
That he was aware of a captain-man
Drew near to the waterside.
He was aware of his coming
Down in the gloaming alone;
And he looked in the face of the man
And lo! the face was his own.
"This is my weird," he said,
"And now I ken the worst;
For many shall fall the morn,
But I shall fall with the first.
O, you of the outland tongue,
You of the painted face,
This is the place of my death;
Can you tell me the name of the place?"
"Since the Frenchmen have been here
They have called it Sault-Marie;
But that is a name for priests
And for not you and me.
It went by another word,"
Quoth he of the shaven head:
"It was called Ticonderoga
In the days of the great dead."

And it fell on the morrow's morning,
In the fiercest of the fight,

That the Cameron bit the dust
  As he foretold at night;
And far from the hills of heather,
  Far from the isles of the sea,
He sleeps in the place of the name
  As it was doomed to be.

HEATHER ALE

FROM the bonny bells of heather
They brewed a drink long-syne,
Was sweeter far than honey,
Was stronger far than wine.
They brewed it and they drank it,
And lay in a blessed swound
For days and days together
In their dwellings underground.

There rose a king in Scotland,
A fell man to his foes,
He smote the Picts in battle,
He hunted them like roes.
Over miles of the red mountain
He hunted as they fled,
And strewed the dwarfish bodies
Of the dying and the dead.

Summer came in the country,
Red was the heather bell;
But the manner of the brewing
None was alive to tell.
In graves that were like children's
On many a mountain head,
The Brewsters of the Heather
Lay numbered with the dead.

The king in the red moorland
Rode on a summer's day;
And the bees hummed, and the curlews
Cried beside the way.
The king rode, and was angry,
Black was his brow and pale,
To rule in a land of heather
And lack the Heather Ale.

Chatto & Windus, 1890.

It fortuned that his vassals,
  Riding free on the heath,
Came on a stone that was fallen
  And vermin hid beneath.
Rudely plucked from their hiding,
  Never a word they spoke:
A son and his aged father—
  Last of the dwarfish folk.

The king sat high on his charger,
  He looked on the little men;
And the dwarfish and swarthy couple
  Looked at the king again.
Down by the shore he had them;
  And there on the giddy brink—
"I will give you life, ye vermin,
  For the secret of the drink."

There stood the son and father,
  And they looked high and low;
The heather was red around them,
  The sea rumbled below.
And up and spoke the father,
  Shrill was his voice to hear:
"I have a word in private,
  A word for the royal ear.

"Life is dear to the aged,
  And honour a little thing;
I would gladly sell the secret,"
  Quoth the Pict to the King.
His voice was small as a sparrow's,
  And shrill and wonderful clear:
"I would gladly sell my secret,
  Only my son I fear.

"For life is a little matter,
  And death is nought to the young;
And I dare not sell my honour
  Under the eye of my son.

Take *him,* O king, and bind him,
And cast him far in the deep;
And it's I will tell the secret
That I have sworn to keep."

They took the son and bound him,
Neck and heels in a thong,
And a lad took him and swung him,
And flung him far and strong,
And the sea swallowed his body,
Like that of a child of ten;—
And there on the cliff stood the father,
Last of the dwarfish men.

"True was the word I told you:
Only my son I feared;
For I doubt the sapling courage
That goes without the beard.
But now in vain is the torture,
Fire shall never avail:
Here dies in my bosom
The secret of Heather Ale."

CHRISTMAS AT SEA

THE sheets were frozen hard, and they cut the naked hand;
The decks were like a slide, where a seaman scarce could stand;
The wind was a nor'wester, blowing squally off the sea;
And cliffs and spouting breakers were the only things a-lee.

They heard the surf a-roaring before the break of day;
But 'twas only with the peep of light we saw how ill we lay.
We tumbled every hand on deck instanter, with a shout,
And we gave her the maintops'l, and stood by to go about.

All day we tacked and tacked between the South Head and the North;
All day we hauled the frozen sheets, and got no further forth;
All day as cold as charity, in bitter pain and dread,
For very life and nature we tacked from head to head.

We gave the South a wider berth, for there the tide-race roared;
But every tack we made brought the North Head close aboard:
So 's we saw the cliffs and houses, and the breakers running high,
And the coastguard in his garden, with his glass against his eye.

The frost was on the village roofs as white as ocean foam;
The good red fires were burning bright in every 'longshore home;

Scots Observer, December 22, 1888.

The windows sparkled clear, and the chimneys volleyed
out;
And I vow we sniffed the victuals as the vessel went
about.

The bells upon the church were rung with a mighty jovial
cheer;
For it's just that I should tell you how (of all days in the
year)
This day of our adversity was blessed Christmas morn,
And the house above the coastguard's was the house where
I was born.

O well I saw the pleasant room, the pleasant faces there,
My mother's silver spectacles, my father's silver hair;
And well I saw the firelight, like a flight of homely
elves,
Go dancing round the china-plates that stand upon the
shelves.

And well I knew the talk they had, the talk that was of
me,
Of the shadow on the household and the son that went to
sea;
And O the wicked fool I seemed, in every kind of way,
To be here and hauling frozen ropes on blessèd Christmas
Day.

They lit the high sea-light, and the dark began to fall.
"All hands to loose topgallant sails," I heard the captain
call.
"By the Lord, she'll never stand it," our first mate Jack-
son, cried.
. . . "It's the one way or the other, Mr. Jackson," he
replied.

She staggered to her bearings, but the sails were new and
good,
And the ship smelt up to windward just as though she
understood.

As the winter's day was ending, in the entry of the night,
We cleared the weary headland, and passed below the light.

And they heaved a mighty breath, every soul on board but me,
As they saw her nose again pointing handsome out to sea;
But all that I could think of, in the darkness and the cold,
Was just that I was leaving home and my folks were growing old.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

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FAMILIAR EPISTLE

Boulogne-sur-Mer, Wednesday, 3rd or 4th September, 1872.

BLAME me not that this epistle
Is the first you have from me.
Idleness has held me fettered;
But at last the times are bettered
And once more I wet my whistle
Here, in France beside the sea.

All the green and idle weather
I have had in sun and shower
Such an easy, warm subsistence,
Such an indolent existence,
I should find it hard to sever
Day from day and hour from hour.

Many a tract-provided ranter
May upbraid me, dark and sour,
Many a bland Utilitarian
Or excited Millenarian,
—"*Pereunt et imputantur,*
You must speak to every hour."

But (the very term's deceptive)
You at least my friend will see
That in sunny grassy meadows,
Trailed across by moving shadows
To be actively receptive
Is as much as man can be.

He that all the winter grapples
  Difficulties—thrust and ward—
    Needs to cheer him thro' his duty
    Memories of sun and beauty,
Orchards with the russet apples
  Lying scattered on the sward.

Many such I keep in prison,
  Keep them here at heart unseen,
    Till my muse again rehearses
    Long years hence, and in my verses
You shall meet them rearisen
  Ever comely, ever green.

You know how they never perish,
  How, in time of later art,
    Memories consecrate and sweeten
    These defaced and tempest-beaten
Flowers of former years we cherish
  Half a life, against our heart.

Most, those love-fruits withered greenly,
  Those frail, sickly amourettes,
    How they brighten with the distance
    Take new strength and new existence
Till we see them sitting queenly
  Crowned and courted by regrets!

All that loveliest and best is,
  Aureole-fashion round their head
    They that looked in life but plainly,
    How they stir our spirits vainly
When they come to us Alcestis-
  Like returning from the dead!

Not the old love but another,
  Bright she comes at memory's call,
    Our forgotten vows reviving
    To a newer, livelier living,
As the dead child to the mother
  Seems the fairest child of all.

Thus, our Goethe, sacred master,
Travelling backward thro' his youth
Surely wandered wrong in trying
To renew the old, undying
Loves that cling in memory faster
Than they ever lived in truth.

So; *en voilà assez, de mauvais vers.* Let us finish with a word or two in honest prose, tho' indeed I shall soon be back again and, if you be down in town as I hope, so soon get bribed again down the Lothian Road by a cigar or two and a liquor, that it is perhaps scarce worth the postage to send my letter on before me. I have just been long enough away to be satisfied and even anxious to get home again and talk the matter over with my friends. I shall have plenty to tell you; and principally plenty that I do not care to write; and I daresay you, too, will have a lot of gossip. What about Fevrier? Is the L. J. R. think you to go naked and unashamed this winter? He with his charming idiosyncrasy was in my eyes the vine-leaf that preserved our self-respect. All the rest of us are such shadows, compared to his full-flavoured personality; but I must not spoil my own début. I am trenching upon one of the essayettes which I propose to introduce, as a novelty this year before that august assembly. For we must not let it die. It is a sickly baby, but what with nursing and pap, and the like, I do not see why it should not have a strong manhood after all, and perhaps a green old age. Eh! when we are old (if we ever should be) that too will be one of those cherished memories I have been so rhapsodizing over. We must consecrate our room. We must make it a museum of bright recollections; so that we may go back there white-headed, and say, "*Vixi.*" After all, new countries, sun, music, and all the rest, can never take down our gusty, rainy, smoky, grim old city out of the first place that it has been making for itself in the bottom of my soul, by all pleasant and hard things that have befallen me, for the past twenty years or so. My heart is buried there—say, in Advocates Close!

I don't know why I write so sadly and sentimentally.

Momus is absent on a journey and I may cut my flesh and wail to him as much as I will—he cannot hear me. Talking about my flesh, I am all out in [*two words partly obliterated*] the result of mosquito bites. I am a horrid spectacle and am haunted at bed and board by my resemblance to the "Monarch." Simpson and I got on very well together, and made a very suitable pair. I like him much better than I did when I started, which was almost more than I hoped for.

If you should chance to see Bob, give him my news, and if you have the letter about you, let him see it.

Ever your aff't friend,

R. L. STEVENSON.

P. S.—He can give you some of mine.

To * * * * *

From The Ashley Library Series of Privately Printed Books, London, 1896.

THE ARABESQUE

COMPLAINT OF AN ARTIST

I MADE a fresco on the coronal,
Amid the sounding silence and the void
Of life's wind-spent and unfrequented hall.
I drew the nothings that my soul enjoyed;
The petty image of the enormous fact
I fled; and when the sun soared over all
And threw a brightness on the painted tract,
Lo, the vain lines were reading on the wall!
In vain we think; our life about us lies
O'erscrawled with crooked writ; we toil in vain
To hear the hymn of ancient harmonies
That quire upon the mountain or the plain;
And from the august silence of the skies
Babble of speech returns to us again.

From "Sonnets of This Country," W. Scott, London, 1886.

AULD REEKIE

When chitterin' cauld the day sall daw,
Loud may your bonny bugles blaw
And loud your drums may beat.
Hie owre the land at evenfa'
Your lamps may glitter raw by raw,
Along the gowsty street.

I gang nae mair where ance I gaed,
By Brunston, Fairmileheid, or Braid;
But far frae Kirk and Tron.
O still ayont the muckle sea,
Still are ye dear, and dear to me,
Auld Reekie, still and on!

From the Pall Mall Budget, January 24, 1895.

THE TOUCH OF LIFE

I saw a circle in a garden sit
Of dainty dames and solemn cavaliers,
Whereof some shuddered at the burrowing nit,
And at the carrion worm some burst in tears:
And all, as envying the abhorred estate
Of empty shades and disembodied elves,
Under the laughing stars, early and late,
Sat shamefast at their birth and at themselves.
The keeper of the house of life is fear:
In the rent lion is the honey found
By him that rent it; out of stony ground
The toiler, in the morning of the year,
Beholds the harvest of his grief abound
And the green corn put forth the tender ear.

From "Sonnets of This Country," W. Scott, London, 1886.

THE COCK SHALL CROW

In the morning grey
  The bugles blow
At the break of day:
  The cock shall sing
And the merry bugles ring,
  And all the little brown birds
    sing upon the spray.

The thorn shall blow
  In the month of May,
And my love shall go
  In her holiday array:
But I shall lie
  In the Kirkyard nigh,
While all the little brown birds
    sing upon the spray.

From Black and White, Christmas Number, 1895.

OF HIS PITIABLE TRANSFORMATION

I who was young so long,
  Young and alert and gay,
  Now that my hair is grey
Begin to change my song.

Now I know right from wrong,
  Now I know *pay* and *pray,*
I who was young so long,
  Young and alert and gay.

Now I follow the throng,
  Walk in the beaten way,
  Hear what the elders say,
And own that I was wrong—
I who was young so long.

From Longman's Magazine, April, 1888.

FINE PACIFIC ISLANDS

(Heard in a public-house at Rotherhithe)

THE jolly English yellowboy
  Is a 'ansome coin when new,
The Yankee Double-eagle
  Is large enough for two.
O, these may do for seaport towns,
  For cities these may do;
But the dibbs that takes the Hislands
  Are the dollars of Peru:
    O, the fine Pacific Hislands,
    O, the dollars of Peru!

It's there we buy the cocoanuts
  Mast 'eaded in the blue;
It's there we trap the lasses
  All awaiting for the crew;
It's there we buy the trader's rum
  What bores a seaman through . . .
In the fine Pacific Hislands
  With the dollars of Peru:
    In the fine Pacific Hislands
    With the dollars of Peru!

Now, messmates, when my watch is up
  And I am quite broached to,
I'll give a tip to 'Evving
  Of the 'ansome thing to do:
Let 'em just refit this sailor-man
  And launch him off anew
To cruise among the Hislands
  Of the dollars of Peru:
    In the fine Pacific Hislands
    With the dollars of Peru!

From Longman's Magazine, January, 1889.

A MARTIAL ELEGY FOR SOME LEAD SOLDIERS

For certain soldiers lately dead
Our reverent dirge shall here be said.
Them, when their martial leader called,
No dread preparative appalled;
But leaden-hearted, leaden-heeled,
I marked them steadfast in the field.
Death grimly sided with the foe,
And smote each leaden hero low.
Proudly they perished, one by one:
The dread Pea-cannon's work was done!
O not for them the tears we shed,
Consigned to their congenial lead;
But while unmoved their sleep they take,
We mourn for their dear Captain's sake,
For their dear Captain, who shall smart
Both in his pocket and his heart,
Who saw his heroes shed their gore
And lacked a shilling to buy more!

Printed in leaflet form at Davos by Samuel L. Osbourne.

BRASHIANA

We found Him as in the Dells of May
  The Dreaming Damsel finds the Earliest Flower:
  Thoughtless we wandered in the evening hour:
Aimless and pleased we went our random way:
In the foot-haunted City, in the Night,
  Among the alternate Lamps we went and came
  Till like a humorous Thunderbolt, that Name,
The hated Name of Brash, assailed our Sight.
We saw, we paused, we entered, seeking Gin.
  His Wrath, like a huge Breaker on the Beach,
    Broke instant forth. He on the Counter beat
    In his infantile Fury; and his Feet
Danced impotent Wrath upon the Floor within.
  Still as we fled we heard his Idiot Screech.

From Outlook, February 26, 1898.

THE LIGHT-KEEPER

I

The brilliant kernel of the night,
  The flaming lightroom circles me:
I sit within a blaze of light
  Held high above the dusky sea.
Far off the surf doth break and roar
Along bleak miles of moonlit shore,
  Where through the tides the tumbling wave
Falls in an avalanche of foam
And drives its churnèd waters home
  Up many an undercliff and cave.

The clear bell chimes: the clockworks strain:
  The turning lenses flash and pass,
Frame turning within glittering frame
  With frosty gleam of moving glass:
Unseen by me, each dusky hour
The sea-waves welter up the tower
  Or in the ebb subside again;
And ever and anon all night,
Drawn from afar by charm of light,
  A sea-bird beats against the pane.

And lastly when dawn ends the night
  And belts the semi-orb of sea,
The tall, pale pharos in the light
  Looks white and spectral as may be.
The early ebb is out: the green
Straight belt of sea-weed now is seen,
  That round the basement of the tower
Marks out the interspace of tide:
And watching men are heavy-eyed,
  And sleepless lips are dry and sour.

Copyright, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1898.

The night is over like a dream:
  The sea-birds cry and dip themselves;
And in the early sunlight, steam
  The newly-bared and dripping shelves,
Around whose verge the glassy wave
With lisping wash is heard to lave;
  While, on the white tower lifted high,
With yellow light in faded glass
The circling lenses flash and pass,
  And sickly shine against the sky.

II

As the steady lenses circle
With a frosty gleam of glass;
And the clear bell chimes,
And the oil brims over the lip of the burner,
Quiet and still at his desk,
The lonely light-keeper
Holds his vigil.

Lured from afar,
The bewildered sea-gull beats
Dully against the lantern;
Yet he stirs not, lifts not his head
From the desk where he reads,
Lifts not his eyes to see
The chill blind circle of night
Watching him through the panes.
This is his country's guardian,
The outmost sentry of peace.
This is the man,
Who gives up all that is lovely in living
For the means to live.

Poetry cunningly gilds
The life of the light-keeper,
Held on high in the blackness
In the burning kernel of night.

The seaman sees and blesses him;
The Poet, deep in a sonnet,
Numbers his inky fingers
Fitly to praise him;
Only we behold him,
Sitting, patient and stolid,
Martyr to a salary.